CITY HILIGHTS

The Truth Speaks

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Cabinet approves Hate Speech & Hate Crimes (Prevention) Bill

Karnataka Cabinet approves eight key Bills, including the Hate Crimes Bill, targeting hate speech, social boycotts, and digital accountability statewide.

BENGALURU

The Karnataka Cabinet, chaired by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, has approved eight major draft Bills, including the much-discussed Hate Speech and Hate Crime Bills. These Bills will be tabled during the upcoming Belagavi Assembly session.

A key proposal cleared by the Cabinet is the "Hate Crimes and Hate Speech (Prohibition and Prevention) Bill, 2025," aimed at curbing hate speech and hate-motivated offences across the state. The government intends to introduce a dedicated law to control hate speech, which often leads to communal tensions, public disorder, and threats to law and order.

The Bill also introduces accountability for digital intermediaries—including social media platforms, search engines, telecom operators, online marketplaces, and internet service providers—for harmful content hosted or circulated through their platforms.

Takedown Powers

Additionally, the Bill empowers district collectors to issue preventive orders in areas where communal disturbances are anticipated. Collectors may restrict meetings, rallies, use of loudspeakers, or any activity likely to provoke fear or hatred. Such prohibitory orders can initially be imposed for up to 30 days and extended to a maximum of 60 days if required.

Proposed Punishment

Anyone delivering hate speech can face up to seven years of imprisonment.The Bill also allows for a fine of up to ₹50,000 in addition to imprisonment, emphasizing both deterrence and accountability for spreading hate or inciting communal tensions.

Cow Protection Act amended

The Cabinet also amended the Karnataka Prevention and Protection of Animals (Cow Slaughter) Act, 2020, allowing seized vehicles to be released based on bank guarantees or indemnity bonds, easing burdens on small vehicle owners.

QUICK READ

Palakkad MLA Rahul expelled from Cong

PALAKKAD: Kerala's Palakkad MLA Rahul Mamkootathil, who had been under disciplinary action since August 25, was expelled from the primary membership of Congress on Thursday as sexual assault allegations mounted against him. Incidentally, his expulsion comes exactly a year after he took oath as the newly elected Palakkad MLA on 4 December 2024, following a by-election to the constituency that year. KPCC President Sunny Joseph MLA announced the expulsion after multiple cases were registered, and internal complaints surfaced against the former Youth Congress leader, who has been absconding since the police registered a case against him.

Putin must have authorized nerve agent attack

LONDON: A UK public inquiry has concluded that Russian President Vladimir Putin authorised the 2018 Novichok attack on former double agent Sergei Skripal, calling it a "reckless" show of power that caused the death of innocent bystander Dawn Sturgess. Skripal and his daughter Yulia were found unconscious in Salisbury after Novichok was applied to their home door handle. Sturgess died four months later after exposure from a contaminated perfume bottle. Inquiry chair Anthony Hughes stated that GRU operatives carried out the attack, which "must have been authorised at the highest level," and described their actions as "astonishingly reckless."

PUTIN ARRIVES IN DELHI FOR STRATEGIC TALKS WITH MODI

Russian President Vladimir Putin arrived in New Delhi for high-level talks with PM Narendra Modi

NEW DELHI

Russian President Vladimir Putin arrived in New Delhi on Thursday for bilateral talks with Prime Minister Narendra Modi. PM Modi greeted him at the airport with a warm handshake and hug. This marks Putin's first visit to India in four years, expected to boost Russian oil, missile systems, fighter jets, and other strategic agreements beyond defence and energy.

The nearly 27-hour visit gains significance amid the recent downturn in India-US relations. The summit is expected to see several agreements in trade, energy, and strategic sectors. Putin will receive a ceremonial welcome at Rashtrapati Bhavan, followed by a working lunch with Modi at Hyderabad House. His visit coincides with the 25th anniversary of the India-Russia Strategic Partnership, elevated to a "Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership" in 2010.

Trade and energy discussions are key, with India seeking to address a $65 billion import-export imbalance with Russia, and navigate US tariffs and sanctions on Russian crude. Moscow has offered additional oil discounts, while talks on fertilisers, small modular reactors, and a potential free-trade pact with the Eurasian Economic Union are planned.

Putin is also expected to brief Modi on Ukraine, with India reiterating its support for dialogue and diplomacy. The visit will conclude with the launch of the India channel of Russia's state broadcaster and a state banquet hosted by President Droupadi Murmu, with Putin departing around 9 pm.

Defence Ministers of India, Russia hold crucial talks

India and Russia on Thursday resolved to expand their bilateral defence cooperation with New Delhi showing its keen interest in procuring additional batches of S-400 missile systems from Moscow to bolster its combat prowess.

The two sides deliberated on ways to enhance the overall defence and strategic ties at a key delegation-level meeting between Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and his Russian counterpart Andrey Belousov that took place a day ahead of the 23rd India-Russia annual summit.

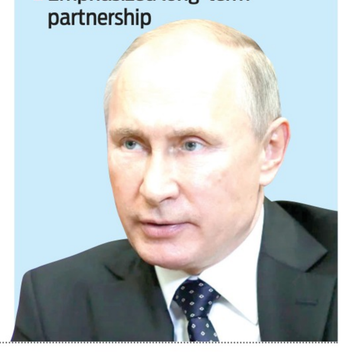
Vladimir Putin's last visit to India (Dec 6, 2021)

Purpose
- 21st India–Russia Annual Summit
- First visit post-pandemic

Agreements & Cooperation
- Defence & military-technical collaboration
- Trade, investment, energy, space, science, technology, culture, education
- Connectivity projects: Chennai–Vladivostok Maritime Corridor & INSTC

Global Issues Discussed
- Afghanistan situation
- Post-pandemic economic recovery
- International strategic cooperation

Outcome
- Strengthened India–Russia strategic ties
- Signed multiple bilateral agreements across sectors
- Emphasized long-term partnership



US deported 3,258 Indian nationals in 2025: EAM

"They have also conveyed that their policy of shackling deportees is followed to ensure the safety and security of all passengers on these flights. In the past, they claim that there have been instances of violence by deportees against fellow deportees and supporting crew members on such deportation flights." .

—S. Jaishankar, External Affairs Minister

NEW DELHI

The United States has deported a total of 18,822 Indian nationals since 2009, including 3,258 individuals so far in 2025, the Union government informed the Rajya Sabha on Thursday. External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar, while responding to supplementaries, noted that 617 Indians were deported in 2023 and 1,368 in 2024. Of those deported in 2025, 2,032 (around 62.3%) returned on regular commercial flights, while 1,226 (37.6%) arrived on chartered flights operated by US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) or US Customs and Border Protection (CBP).

Jaishankar highlighted that the Ministry of External Affairs has consistently raised concerns with US authorities regarding the treatment of deportees, especially the use of shackles, with heightened concern for women and children.

He also pointed out the role of state governments and the National Investigation Agency (NIA) in addressing human trafficking, noting that Punjab accounts for the highest number of such cases.

India reported 18,822 nationals deported from the US since 2009, with 3,258 in 2025, as Jaishankar flagged concerns over deportee treatment.

The NIA, which has an anti-human trafficking division, has registered 27 cases, leading to 169 arrests and chargesheets against 132 individuals. Significant arrests include key traffickers in Haryana and Punjab on August 7, and in Himachal Pradesh on October 2. Jaishankar emphasized the government's commitment to tackling human trafficking and ensuring the welfare of deported citizens.

The Harjit Kaur case

Regarding the case of Harjit Kaur, a 73-year-old Punjabi woman, who was deported in September this year, Jaishankar denied that she was handcuffed, but said she was rather mistreated during her detention. Jaishankar said her matter was raised by them with the US authorities. "Whenever any flight with deportees comes, the deportees are invariably interviewed by the officials of the Government of India. In this case, our immigration officers have confirmed that she was not handcuffed.

IndiGo hit by fresh wave of disruptions; 300 flights cancelled

NEW DELHI

IndiGo's operations were hit by a second consecutive day of disruption on Thursday, with over 300 domestic and international flights cancelled across major airports, including Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Chennai and Hyderabad. This follows Wednesday's chaos, when more than 200 flights were cancelled and several others delayed due to nationwide crew shortages and severe software glitches.

Officials said a slowdown in SITA software, which handles ticketing and boarding, caused cascading delays as boarding passes took unusually long to process.

IndiGo CEO apologises for delays

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of IndiGo Airlines on Thursday acknowledged that the company "could not live up to the promise of providing a good experience to customers." In a letter to IndiGo employees, Pieter Elbers apologised for the cancellations and delays of hundreds of flights operated by the airline in the past few days. The CEO blamed operational challenges, including the implementation of the revised Flight Duty Time Limitations (FDTL) for the disruptions to the airline's services.

More on page 2

Major Airports Hit
- Delhi: 91 cancellations
- Bengaluru: 70 cancellations
- Mumbai: 86 cancellations
- Chennai: 26 cancellations

Passenger Impact
- Travellers stranded for hours in multiple cities.
- Complaints of no clear communication, no timely updates, and insufficient accommodation.

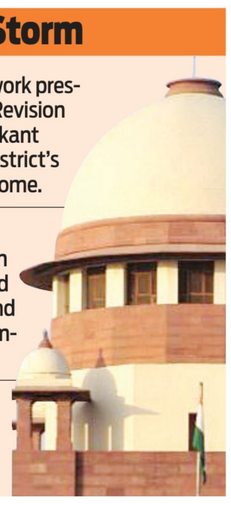
DGCA Action
- DGCA has summoned IndiGo to explain the widespread disruptions.
- Airline asked to present immediate corrective measures.

SC SUPPORTS BLOS

Supreme Court asks states, UT's to provide more staff for SIR

BLO Suicides Spark Storm

- Over the past few weeks, more than several BLOs have allegedly died by suicide, blaming excessive workload and pressure from senior officials.
- BLO reportedly died due to work pressure from Special Intensive Revision (SIR) on December 2. Kamlakant Sharma, 40, from Hathras district's Sikandra Rao, collapsed at home.
- BLO identified as Mohit Chaudhary, assigned to SIR in Meerut reportedly attempted suicide, citing harassment and excessive workload on December 3, 2025.
- A 46-year-old BLO, Sarvesh Singh, allegedly died by suicide in Moradabad, UP, due to work pressure from his first SIR electoral rolls assignment.



NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Thursday issued a series of directions to address the challenges faced by Booth Level Officers (BLOs) during the special intensive revision (SIR) of electoral rolls across various states.

A two-judge Bench, led by Chief Justice of India Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi, directed states affected by the SIR to deploy additional staff to reduce the working hours of personnel engaged in the process. The court also ordered that when an individual has a specific reason for seeking exemption, the state government must consider such requests on a case-by-case basis and provide a replacement. Moreover, states are required to provide additional workforce wherever necessary. The apex court added that if other forms of relief are not provided, the aggrieved individual can approach the court for redressal.

The directions followed an application filed by Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK) against the Election Commission of India (ECI), highlighting the distressing condition of BLOs, including suicides allegedly linked to work pressure. Thursday's hearing was part of a batch of petitions challenging the SIR process in states such as Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, and Kerala.

Senior Advocate Gopal Sankaranarayanan, appearing for TVK, informed the court that 35 to 40 BLOs, many of whom were Anganwadi workers and teachers, had reportedly died by suicide.

CM assures to declare Sept 13 as Women Employees' Day

BENGALURU

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah announced that the government will declare September 13 as Women Employees' Day to honour the significant contribution of women working in the state administration. Speaking at a women's conference organised by the Karnataka State Government Women Employees' Association in Bengaluru, he said the government has already approved one day of paid menstrual leave every month for women employees. Discussions are also underway to provide office space for the association at Bal Bhavan.

Siddaramaiah reaffirmed the government's commitment to eliminating gender discrimination, noting that women today are contributing equally to governance and other fields. He stressed that women play a crucial role in shaping their children's personality and must instil rationality and scientific thinking in them. Creating awareness among children about superstitions and blind beliefs is essential for building a progressive society, he added.

QUICK READ

Bike collides with private bus, rider killed

Bengaluru

A motorcyclist was killed on the spot in a road accident on the Bengaluru-Tumakuru National Highway 48 near Madanayakanahalli. The accident took place when the bike collided with a private bus that was parked inadvertently on the express highway. The deceased has been identified as 21-year-old Sumanth J Gowda, a resident of Nagasandra. The bus driver has been taken into custody by the Nelamangala traffic police and a case has been registered against him. The body has been sent to Nelamangala General Hospital for postmortem.

Woman dies by suicide after 3 months of love marriage

Bengaluru

A 23-year-old woman committed suicide by hanging herself just three months after her marriage, her family members alleged that her husband's family members were responsible for her death. The unfortunate incident took place at Vidyaman Nagar under Byadarahalli police station limits. The deceased, 23-year-old, was married to Abhishek (30) three months ago. On Thursday, Amulya hanged herself at his house. While Amulya was a resident of Andrahalli, Abhishek was a resident of Vidyaman Nagar. Both of them loved each other as they lived in adjacent areas. The couple got married three months ago and blamed her husband Abhishek's family for her death. A case has been registered at Byadarahalli police station.

Social activist assaulted for standing up for street vendors

Bengaluru

Bhartiya Seva Samiti president Hoodi Chinni (Ramachandra) was allegedly assaulted near EPIP Zone High Gate near Kundalahalli near Whitefield in Mahadevapura constituency. The incident took place when the GBA was carrying out a pavement eviction drive. Bhartiya Seva Samiti President was allegedly assaulted by the building owner Umashankar for standing up for the street vendors and demanding justice. Street vendors staged a sit-in protest against the attack. ACP Reena Suvarna visited the spot and tried to bring the situation under control.

136 IndiGo flights cancelled in 24 hrs at B'luru airport

IndiGo has been hit by flight disruptions over the past few days due to various factors, including crew shortages, technology-related issues, and airport congestion

Continued from page 1

India's largest airline, IndiGo, cancelled 136 flights at Bengaluru's KIA over two days due to a compounded effect.

Thousands of passengers were left stranded after 136 flights operated by IndiGo, the country's largest airline, were cancelled at KIA on Wednesday and Thursday.

IndiGo has been hit by flight disruptions over the past few days due to various factors, including crew shortages following the implementation of new crew rest and duty norms, technology-related issues, and airport congestion.

According to the sources at KIA, 63 flights were cancelled Wednesday, and 41 arrival and 32 departure flights were cancelled Thursday morning. The situation was no different in other parts of the country as flights were also cancelled in metropolitan cities, including Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata, and Hyderabad.

IndiGo acknowledged that its operations have been "significantly disrupted across the network for the past two days, and sincerely apologised to customers for the inconvenience.

A multitude of unforeseen operational challenges, including minor technology glitches, schedule changes linked to the winter season, adverse weather conditions, increased congestion in the aviation system and the implementation of updated crew rostering rules, Flight Duty Time Limitations, had a negative compounding impact on our operations in a way that was not feasible to be anticipated. To contain the disruption and restore stability, we have initiated calibrated adjustments to our schedules, the airlines said in a press statement.

These measures will remain in place for the next 48 hours and will allow us to normalize our operations and progressively recover our punctuality across the network. Our teams are working around the clock to ease customer discomfort and ensure operations stabilize as quickly as possible. Furthermore, the affected customers are being offered alternate travel arrangements to reach their destinations or refunds, as applicable.

Several harried passengers posted about the delays on social media, and some said they were not refunded after they cancelled their tickets.

Meanwhile, IndiGo requested fliers to check the latest flight status at https://www.goindigo.in/check-flight-status.html before heading to the airport.

Karnataka plans big push for electronics manufacturing

BENGALURU

Large and Medium Industries Minister M. B. Patil on Thursday directed officials to prepare a vision document aimed at boosting mobile and electronic product manufacturing and design in the State, with the goal of attracting investments of USD 150 billion in the future years.

At his Vidhana Soudha office, Patil held extensive discussions with a high-level delegation led by Pankaj Mohindroo, Chairman of the India Cellular and Electronics Association (ICEA).

Speaking after the meeting, the Minister noted that the Union Ministry of Electronics and IT had announced an electronics components manufacturing scheme in April this year. The State Government is exploring the possibility of introducing a parallel scheme and is currently studying its feasibility. The proposal is still in the draft stage, and we welcome suggestions from ICEA, he said.

Patil added that Karnataka has significant potential not only in mobile-phone components but also in industrial and strategic electronics. Officials have been instructed to study the Union Government's scheme along with similar policies implemented by other States.

Pankaj Mohindroo said the Union scheme prioritises sub-assemblies such as displays and camera modules, bare components, and essential manufacturing equipment. He added that the programme offers performance-linked incentives and up to 25 percent capital subsidy. The Centre has earmarked ₹22,900 crore for the scheme, he said.

The meeting was attended by Industries Department Principal Secretary S. Selvakumar, Industries Commissioner Gunjan Krishna, and other senior officials.

> Minister MB Patil informed that, until November this year, the Union Government has cleared 17 investment proposals worth Rs 7,172 crore. These projects are expected to create 11,800 direct jobs and generate products valued at over Rs 65,000 crore.

Artist uses humor to bridge generational gaps in new play

BENGALURU

From the rehearsals of Kaapiz, Crypto and Chaos, humour is a way to reach out to a wider audience, according to Bengaluru-based theatre artiste Shilpa Bansal. In her new play, Kaapiz, Crypto and Chaos, she explores the messy and often hilarious ways generations try to understand one another. Developed with Theatre for Change, the play blends nostalgia with the present

We keep saying 'generation gap' like it's some huge chasm. But what does that actually mean in everyday life. shares Shilpa as she wanted to explore this question without resorting to moralising. In this story, the seniors talk about love letters, waiting at the postbox, and the joy of slow communication. Whereas, the youngsters counter that with emojis, dating apps, and breakups that happen on Snapchat before you even blink. The point is never to show who's right or wrong. The beauty is in how both sides are trying to reach each other from where they stand. That's where real connection happens, she explains.

According to Shilpa, authenticity isn't about grand gestures; it's about the everyday things that make people say, 'Oh, this happens in my house too. She says, Every scene is pulled from the absurd, funny, frustrating things that happen in all our homes. She cites examples that every household can recognise how the grandparents are always surprised by how something can come in 10 minutes.

"Everyone has had that one moment where you're explaining to your parents what the laughing emoji means, or why the skull emoji doesn't mean someone actually died, she says. These are shared experiences, that's why audiences immediately relate. The emotional pivot of the play is also rooted in everyday reality. "A senior citizen falling for a digital scam is very real. The cyber world can be frightening for older people. That vulnerability is very real, and showing it honestly helps build empathy, she adds.

People come to a play carrying so much stress, work pressure, family issues, heartbreak, disappointments. My job is not to add to that weight but to make them feel lighter, believes Shilpa. But sometimes, when you present something emotionally heavy in a serious way, people shut down. But if you wrap the same truth in humour, they absorb it willingly. One might realise something important about their own life while smiling — that's the power of comedy, she concludes.

Aryan Khan faces backlash for public misbehavior

BENGALURU

Bollywood superstar Shah Rukh Khan's son Aryan Khan has been accused of misbehaving in public. Aryan Khan was seen standing on the balcony of a pub in the presence of the sons of Ministers and MLAs. The silence of the police, who would have immediately registered a case if ordinary citizens had behaved like this, has raised many questions.

Aryan Khan, Minister Zameer Ahmad Khan's son Zaid Khan and MLA NA Harris were present at the scene. Harris had come to the pub with his son Mohammed Nalapad. When Aryan pointed the middle finger, Zaid Khan and Nalapad also responded with a smile. There are widespread suspicions as to whether this political connection is the reason for the inaction of the police.

In a metropolis like Bengaluru, such indecent behaviour in public should be taken seriously. Questions are being raised in the public sphere as to how right it is for outsiders to make fun of the people here and laugh at it.

Beedi demand increased in Parappana Agrahara jail: SP

BENGALURU

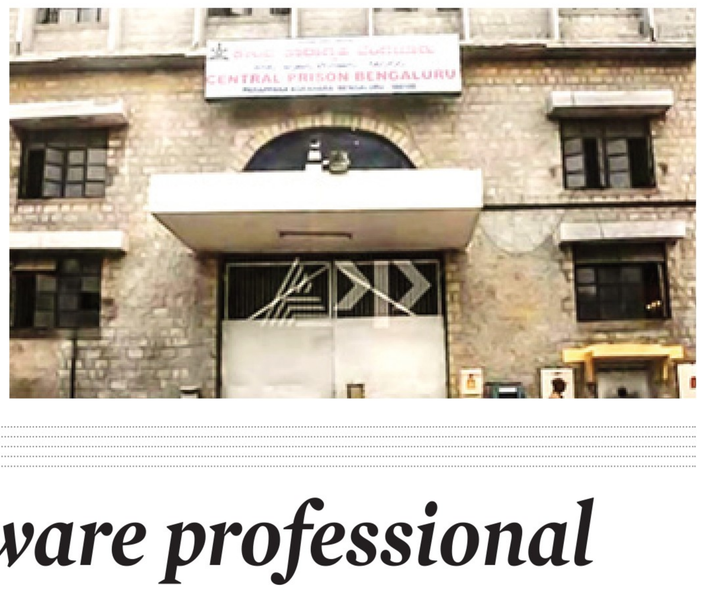
Give me a beedi, give me just one beedi, these words are now common in the Parappana Agrahara Central Jail. In Parappana Agrahara Jail, under the leadership of Superintendent of Police Anshu Kumar, illegal activities have been put to a standstill.

In the wake of the illegal activities taking place inside the jail, the new SP Anshu Kumar has taken strict action. The transportation of all kinds of illicit items including bidis, ganja, cigarettes, mobiles, liquor and other items inside the jail has been completely stopped. The SP has succeeded in shutting down all avenues of irregularities.

Thus, the prisoners who were addicted to these addictions are now in dire straits. They beg the staff to give them cigarettes and beedis to satisfy their daily addictions.

Meanwhile, SP Anshu Kumar has also curbed another illegal racket inside the jail. ISIS terrorist Shakeel Hameed Manna was running a chicken and mutton shawarma business inside the jail. In the evening, he used to sell chicken and mutton shawarma to other inmates at double the price.

Shakeel allegedly used to get food items from outside in connivance with jail officials for this business. He used to give a share of the profits from the sale of Shawarma to the jail authorities. However, due to the strict action of SP Anshu Kumar, the terror racket has been completely stopped.



Achala's suicide case: Mayank absconds after CDR report

BENGALURU

Actress Ashika Ranganath's nephew and engineer Achala committed suicide in Bengaluru. The police, who are investigating the case, have received the call details record (CDR) report of the deceased Achala.

According to the report, there were several phone calls between the deceased Achala and the accused Mayank. As soon as the CDR report reached the hands of the police, the accused, Mayank, switched off his phone and went missing. It is suspected that he is absconding fearing that the police will issue a notice and summon him for questioning. The police are currently conducting searches in Hassan and Bengaluru to trace the accused.

The police have sent the FSL of the iPhone used by Achala to gather more crucial evidence in the case. More information and evidence related to the case is expected to be made available by retrieving Achala's WhatsApp data. The police are trying to crack various aspects of the case.

Kannada Book Authority offers incentive for young writers'

BENGALURU

The Kannada Book Authority has invited applications for providing incentives to publish the debut works of young writers for the year 2025-26.

An incentive of Rs. 15,000 will be given for the publication of selected works. Applicants should be between the age group of 18 to 40 years. They should submit a self-declared application form along with a copy of their SSLC certificate or a copy of their official, attested birth certificate. They should also self-declare that the work being submitted is their first work and has not been published anywhere.

The manuscript submitted for selection should be at least 60 pages in 1/8 demmy size when DTP is done. Except for translation, textbook and other research papers prepared for degree/postgraduate degree, the manuscript should be related to Kannada literary genres such as story, novel, poetry, drama, critical article, essay etc. The text of the work should not contain any matter that is offensive to any religion, god, caste, community, profession, community, language, practice, custom, etc.

DREAM SHATTERED

A 'dream house' became trap for 45-year-old software professional

BENGALURU

The relentless pressure of a neighbourhood dispute, a looming civic notice, and a Rs 20-lakh demand he said he could not meet, a combination that pushed a 45-year-old techie to end his life inside the very house he was trying to build.Hours before his scheduled appearance before Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) officials, Murali Govindaraju was found hanging on the second floor of his under-construction home in Nallurahalli on Wednesday morning, leaving behind a 10-page death note accusing a neighbouring family and civic officials of driving him to suicide.

Murali, a software employee at ITPL and father of two minor girls, lived in Brookbond Layout, Whitefield. Police have arrested his neighbours Shashi Nambiar (64) and Usha (57) on charges of abetment and are searching for their son, Varun. The couple has been sent to 14-day judicial custody.

According to police, the contents of Murali's lengthy death note mirror the allegations in a criminal complaint filed by his mother, Lakshmi Govindaraju (61). She stated that her son had been harassed, tortured and repeatedly threatened by the Nambiars, who allegedly demanded Rs 20 lakh to stop accusing him of plan

She said Murali told her that

Wednesday was the deadline the couple had set.Murali had bought the 40x60 sqft plot in 2018 from a close relative of the Nambiars. The relationship soured soon after construction began, with Usha and Shashi repeatedly accusing him of deviation from the approved plan. Lakshmi alleged that when Murali refused to pay, Usha lodged complaints with BBMP officials, prompting them to visit the site frequently and harass him.On Wednesday morning, Murali left home around 6am, telling his family he was under pressure and that Usha and Shashi were torturing him.

He went to the under-construction house and killed himself.Police have booked the couple under Sections 108 (abetment of suicide) and 308 (extortion) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS). A senior officer said preliminary inquiries show the Nambiars had filed multiple complaints since 2018, making Murali "run around BBMP offices, the police station, and local courts."GBA officials confirmed they had issued Murali a notice asking him to appear before them on Wednesday. "Usha approached BBMP alleging violations. After a spot inspection, BBMP issued a notice," the officer said.

"The couple allegedly demanded Rs 20 lakh to stop harassing him."Police said several locals have now come forward alleging that the Nambiars regularly filed complaints to extort money under the pretext of activism. "People in the area say many homes have faced similar harassment," the officer said. "We request all affected residents to file complaints."The friction between Murali and the Nambiars began soon after he purchased the land in 2018 — a conflict that, according to investigators, escalated over the years and ended with a devastating outcome.

QUICK READ

Gadag to hold Ambedkar Mahaparinirvana Puja

Gadag

Gadag will celebrate the 69th Mahaparinirvana of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar on December 6 at 10 am in the District Administration Building auditorium. The program honors the architect of India's Constitution and invites people's representatives, district and taluk officials, leaders from Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, backward classes, minority communities, eminent personalities, and office bearers of organizations to participate. The Deputy Director of the Social Welfare Department, Dr. Nanda Hanabaratti, emphasized the importance of widespread attendance to pay tribute to Dr. Ambedkar's legacy and contributions toward social justice, equality, and empowerment.

Applications open for Kittur Rani Chennamma Award

Koppal

The Department of Women and Child Development is inviting applications for the Kittur Rani Chennamma Award for 2025-26. The award honors women and organizations contributing to women's development and recognizes achievements in sports, art, literature, education, and acts of courage that safeguard livelihoods. Eligible individuals and groups can submit applications by December 24, detailing accomplishments. The awards are presented annually on International Women's Day to highlight women's role in society and encourage their contributions. For assistance, applicants can contact the Deputy Director's Office at the District Administration Building in Koppal.

JCBs demolish houses after court verdict

Years ago, Sikandar sold land he didn't own, leading families to spend savings on homes on Rama Rao Sabanis' property

HUBBALLI

The calm of Udayanagar in Hubballi broke early today as loud JCB machines moved in and brought down 47 houses built on disputed land. The demolition followed a clear Supreme Court order, ending a long legal fight and leaving several families suddenly homeless. Many residents said they had trusted the seller without checking the original documents and now feel completely cheated.

The problem began years ago when a man named Sikandar sold plots to several families at low prices. He allegedly claimed that the land belonged to him, and many buyers believed him because the offer seemed affordable.

These families spent their savings to build small homes, hoping to settle peacefully. However, the land actually belonged to Rama Rao Sabanis, the original owner.

When Rama Rao learned that houses had been constructed on his property, he informed the residents and asked them to vacate the land. The families refused, saying they had purchased the sites believing the documents were genuine. With no agreement reached, Rama Rao approached the court for justice.

After a long hearing, the Supreme Court ruled in favor of Rama Rao, confirming that the land belonged to him. Following the verdict, officials carried out the eviction with tight police security to avoid any untoward incidents. Many residents were seen gathering their belongings in hurry and expressing shock over the sudden action.

The demolition has sparked discussions in the area about land fraud and the need for proper verification before buying property. Several families are now on the streets, unsure of their next steps, and hoping the government will offer temporary help as they rebuild their lives.

Haveri opens seven maize procurement centers for farmers

HAVERI

Procurement centers opened in key Haveri and Ranebennur taluk villages, with farmer registration starting December 4; Deputy Commissioner Dr. Vijaya Mahantesh urged farmers to participate

The district administration of Haveri has opened seven maize procurement centers to help farmers sell their produce at the government-set support price. Each farmer can sell 12 to 20 quintals of maize at Rs. 2,400 per quintal, according to officials.

The procurement centers have been set up in key locations, including the primary agricultural cooperative societies of Havanur, Gutthal, Belavigi, and Negalu in Haveri taluk, and in Kamadoda, Karura, and Itagi villages in Ranebennur taluk. Registration for farmers began today, December 4, with Deputy Commissioner Dr. Vijaya Mahantesh urging farmers to make use of the centers.

"Each farmer can sell 12 to 20 quintals of maize per acre at the support price. These centers are part of the government's plan to ensure fair prices for the farmers' hard work," said Dr. Mahantesh.

However, some farmers remain dissatisfied with the arrangement. On Wednesday evening, the district administration held a meeting with farmer leaders, including the Deputy Commissioner and Haveri SP Yashoda Vantagodi, to resolve disputes over the maize purchase. Farmers demanded that at least 100 quintals of maize be purchased from each farmer and that the price be increased to Rs. 3,000 per quintal, combining the central government's Rs. 2,400 and an additional Rs. 600 from the state government.

The meeting failed to meet all demands, and farmers warned that they may protest by blocking National Highway 48 on December 8. They also called for a procurement center in every taluk to make maize sales easier and more accessible.

District officials said they will continue dialogue with farmers and stressed that the seven centers are ready to begin operations immediately. Farmers have been asked to register their produce and cooperate with the authorities to ensure smooth procurement.

With maize harvest season in full swing, the centers are expected to provide timely support to farmers, though discussions over price and quantity are likely to continue in the coming days.

The RPF's "Meri Saheli Abhiyan" ensures safety for solo female passengers, monitoring 32 trains and collecting feedback

Railway Protection Force rescues children, ensures safe travel

HUBBALLI

The Railway Protection Force (RPF) of South Western Railway has once again shown its commitment to passenger safety by rescuing 41 children in November and reuniting them with their families.

Under the "Nanhe Farishte" (Little Angels) operation, 34 boys and 7 girls, separated from their families for various reasons, were rescued and handed over to NGOs and police authorities. In addition, six elderly people, including four men and two women, were assisted and placed under proper care.

The RPF is also running the "Meri Saheli Abhiyan," a women-centric campaign aimed at ensuring the safety of female passengers travelling alone. Seat and berth details are monitored, and feedback is collected at the end of journeys. Currently, 32 trains across the region are covered under this initiative.

To prevent ticket scams, the RPF conducted checks at travel agencies across Karnataka and Goa. Fourteen offenders were arrested, 22 tickets worth Rs. 30,636 and 130 expired tickets valued at Rs. 1,73,223 were seized, ensuring fair ticket availability.

Under its Satark and Narco operations, the RPF also seized 384 bottles of liquor and 63.966 kg of ganja worth over Rs. 30 lakh, arresting three criminals and handing the cases to the respective authorities.

In addition, lost passenger items worth Rs. 15,18,107, including laptops, mobiles, and jewellery, were recovered and returned. Seven suspected pickpockets were arrested during "Yatri Suraksha" operations, and 90–95 RPF personnel escorted 30–35 express and special trains daily to maintain safety.

The force also registered 11 cases under the Railway Property (Unauthorised Possession) Act, 1966, recovering stolen railway property worth Rs. 1,16,099 and arresting eight offenders, according to Dr. Manjunath Kanamadi, Chief Public Relations Officer of South Western Railway.

Through these efforts, the RPF continues to ensure that passengers travel safely, while protecting children, women, and the public from crime across the railway network.

Nargund Municipality orders stray dog control

GADAG

Nargund Municipality has directed all private and government schools, hospitals, sports complexes, bus stands, and railway stations to count stray dogs on their premises and report the numbers to the Chief Officer. Following Supreme Court orders in Suo Motu Writ Petition No. 5/2025, institutions must appoint a nodal officer to assist in relocating stray dogs and preventing their entry. Organizations allowing dogs to remain on-site may bear relocation costs, and legal action will follow for non-compliance. The municipality urged timely cooperation to ensure safety and adherence to court directives, according to an official statement.

Gadag Taluk members take charge of Panchayats

GADAG

In an effort to improve the management of guarantee schemes, the Gadag Taluk Committee of the Karnataka State Guarantee Schemes Implementation Authority has assigned taluk-level members to oversee various Gram Panchayats.

Taluka Chairman Ashok Mandali shared that this move aims to ensure smooth and effective implementation of guarantee schemes across the taluk. Under the new arrangement, specific members will be responsible for different Gram Panchayats and wards.

Ashok Mandali himself will supervise the Gram Panchayats in Rona and Naragund Assembly constituencies. Krishnagowda H Patil will manage the Hulakoti and Kurtakoti Panchayats. Shambhu S Kale has been entrusted with Wards 1, 2, 15, 16, and 21, while Smt. Meenakshi Benakannavar will look after Wards 27, 28, and 29. Mrs. Savitri Hoogara will be in charge of Wards 24, 31, 32, and 35.

The officials are expected to coordinate directly with local residents and Panchayat staff to address concerns, monitor progress, and ensure that the benefits of the schemes reach those who need them most. Residents can contact the officials through their respective mobile numbers for any scheme-related queries or assistance. This step reflects the taluk administration's commitment to strengthening local governance and better serving the people.

Month-long Basava discourse held in Hubballi schools

HUBBALLI

A month-long Vishwa Basava Dharma Pravachana concluded at Basaveshwara Nagar Government Primary School on Gokul Road, organized by Basava Kendra from November 15 to December 7, 2025. The discourse was delivered by Param Pujya Siddha Basava Deva of Sri Jagaddur Shunyasampadana Peetha, Hunasakhova Math, Yamakanamaradi, Belagavi district.

On behalf of the Horakeri Mastara Education Foundation, Ranichannamma Environmental Service Committee, and Basava Environmental Conservation Committee, the spiritual leader was honored with shawls, scriptures, garlands, fruits, and flowers. He received respectful homage and blessings from the gathered devotees.

Prominent attendees included former North West Karnataka Road Transport Corporation President Sadananda Dangavara, Basava Environment Protection Committee President Prof. S.V. Pattanashetty, Ranichannamma Environment Service Committee President Prof. S.M. Satmara, Basava Kendra President Prof. G.B. Hallal, secretaries, vice presidents, trustees, librarians, and other community leaders.

Originally from Hukkeri Boragalla village in Belagavi, Siddha Basava Deva received his primary education locally and higher studies in Dharwad. He spent four years preaching at Basava Bhavan in Hebbal village, Hukkeri taluk, initiating more than 12,000 linga devotees and 25,000 rudrakshi followers, creating a significant religious movement.

During the sermons, donations received from devotees were used to support higher education for 50 students. The spiritual leader is also actively engaged in providing food, education, and shelter to 23 orphans and underprivileged children. His teachings emphasize righteous living, strong discipline, and religious principles, inspiring devotees across the region.

With his leadership qualities and dedication, Siddha Basava Deva has been recognized by the followers of Yamakkanamaradi as worthy of being the 21st Jagadguru of Sri Jagaddur Shunyasampadana Hunasakhova Math.

Application period extended for Christian Community loans

KOPPAL

The Karnataka Christian Community Development Corporation (KCCDC) has extended the application submission deadline for 2025-26 loan schemes to December 15. The programs aim to provide financial support to Christian community members for education, entrepreneurship, and farming.

Under the Arivu Loan Scheme, students appearing for FRESH CET or NEET can avail loans between ₹50,000 and ₹5 lakh. Foreign education aspirants can get loans up to ₹20 lakh.

The Swavalambi Sarathi Subsidy Scheme offers ₹75,000 to ₹3 lakh for purchasing taxis, goods vehicles, and autorickshaws. Shramshakti Loan and Subsidy Scheme provides ₹50,000 (₹25,000 loan + ₹25,000 subsidy) to start or expand small businesses. A special version targets widows, divorced, and unmarried women for economic empowerment.

The Vrvyti Protsaka Scheme gives ₹1 lakh (₹50,000 loan + ₹50,000 subsidy) for small businesses, retail trade, and vehicle repair services. The Ganga Kalyan Yojana provides ₹3–4 lakh subsidy for borewell drilling, pump sets, and electricity connections for farmers owning 1.2 to 5 acres of land.

Through the Business Enterprise Direct Loan Scheme, entrepreneurs can access loans up to ₹20 lakh. Women self-help groups can receive 50% subsidy up to ₹2 lakh for self-employment projects.

Applications must be submitted online at http://kccdclonline.karnataka.gov.in by December 15. For details, applicants may contact the District Manager at 08539-225008.

Koppal doctors return ₹ 16,000 taken illegally

KOPPAL

Koppal residents were shocked after it was revealed that doctors at a private hospital had taken money from a patient under the Ayushman Bharat scheme, which is supposed to provide free treatment to eligible people. The case came to light when Lalita, an ASHA worker from Gangavathi, realized she had been charged Rs 16,000 for kidney stone surgery she underwent in September 2024.

Lalita had visited Mallikarjuna Multispeciality Hospital because the local government hospital lacked specialists. She was charged Rs 5,000 during registration, Rs 6,000 for medicines, and another Rs 5,000 as the final bill. At no point did the hospital issue proper receipts.

After returning home, Lalita received a message from the health department stating that her surgery should have been fully covered by the government.

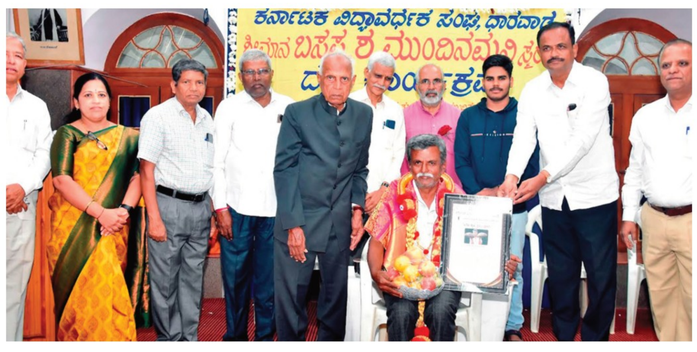
She immediately tried to resolve the issue but faced resistance from hospital staff who denied taking the money. Lalita persisted for over a year, repeatedly approaching the authorities. Finally, under the direction of District Collector Suresh Hitnal, the hospital admitted its mistake and returned the full Rs 16,000 to Lalita on November 28, 2025, through a cheque.

ORGANIC FARMING EXCELLENCE

Basava Agriculture Award honors organic farming excellence

DHARWAD

Malleshappa Bisirotti, an organic farmer from Hiregujala, was presented with the prestigious Basava Krishi Award in a ceremony organized by the Karnataka Vidyavardhaka Sangha, commemorating the contributions of the late farmer Di. Basappa Shankreppa of Amminabavi village. Senior legal expert K.B. Navalagimath praised Di. Basappa Sahadmani as a disciplined and outstanding farmer whose achievements and progressive agricultural practices left a lasting impression despite limited formal education.



Speaking at the event, awardee Malleshappa Bisirotti emphasized the importance of cow dung in agriculture. He explained that cow dung not only provides essential nutrients but also retains moisture in the soil, boosting crop yields. "For the last 20 years, we have relied solely on cow dung for cultivation and achieved remarkable results. Farmers across the country should recognize its value and use it abundantly," he said.

The event also honored Rishi Krishna Bongale, a rural talent from Amminabavi who passed the National Defence Academy (NDA) 2025 examination conducted by the Union Public Service Commission.

Philanthropist and lawyer Sadananda Vadhamani, along with Kaviva Sangha working president Basavaprabhu Hosakeri, spoke at the program, appreciating the efforts of farmers and the youth.

The ceremony saw the presence of prominent community leaders and farmers, including Lawyer Shivananda Bhavikatti, Guru Hiremath, Dr. Dhanwantha Hajavagol, Basavanneppa Navalgund, and many others, along with farmer women from Amminabavi. Shankar Halagatti, General Secretary of the Poet's Association, welcomed the gathering, while Dr. Shailaja Amarshetty compered the event and Veeranna Oddee proposed the vote of thanks.

The program highlighted the significance of organic farming, the role of traditional knowledge, and the dedication of rural farmers in sustaining agriculture while inspiring younger generations.

QUICK READ

Yelaburga to mark Ambedkar Parinirvana Day

Koppal

Yelaburga Taluk Administration will celebrate the 69th Maha Parinirvana Day of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, the architect of India's Constitution, on December 6 at 9:30 am. The event will begin with garlanding Dr. Ambedkar's statue at Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Circle in Yelaburga town. The Tahsildar and National Festival Celebration Committee Chairman urged local representatives, association leaders, officials, media personnel, and citizens to join the program. The observance honors Dr. Ambedkar's contributions to social justice, equality, and nation-building, encouraging participation from all community members in this respectful tribute.

Karnataka Sports Awards applications open online

Koppal

The Youth Empowerment and Sports Department has invited applications for various sports awards for 2024 through the Seva Sindhu portal. Awards include the Ekalavya Award, Lifetime Achievement Award, Karnataka Sports Ratna, Sports Patron Award, Goal: Olympic Medal, Cash Award for 2023-24 achievements, and Sports Scholarships. Interested athletes must apply online at Seva Sindhu by December 10. The Assistant Director of the department said applicants can also contact the office during working hours for more details. This initiative encourages athletes to participate and gain recognition for their achievements in sports at the state level.

Zilla Panchayat launches e-Asset helpline

Koppal

The Zilla Panchayat has launched a helpline to assist the public with the new version of e-Asset technology. Panchayat Development Officers (PDOs) have been assigned to provide guidance and answer queries. Prashant Hiremath, Ramesh Thimmareddy, Shamsher Ali, and Abdul Gafar will attend the Zilla Panchayat Office on designated dates in December from 9 am to 6 pm. Citizens can call the helpline at 0853-9221207 during office hours, 10 am to 5:30 pm, except on weekends and holidays. The initiative aims to ensure smooth adoption of e-Asset technology and prompt public support.

Rahul Jarkiholi becomes Belagavi Apex Bank representative

MLA Jarkiholi confirmed Rahul's five-year role linking Belagavi DCC Bank with Bengaluru's influential Apex Bank

BELAGAVI

In a surprising turn of events in district politics, Rahul Jarkiholi, son of Satish Jarkiholi, has been chosen as the new Apex Bank representative from Belagavi DCC Bank. This decision has dashed the hopes of former Deputy Chief Minister Laxman Savadi, who was aiming to secure the position for another term.

The selection was confirmed by Arabhavi MLA Balachandra Jarkiholi, who played a key role in the decision. Rahul will now serve as a link between the Belagavi DCC Bank and Bengaluru's Apex Bank for the next five years. This role is considered highly prestigious, as Apex Bank representatives have a strong influence on district banking affairs and contribute to selecting the Apex Bank President.

Speaking to the media, MLA Balachandra Jarkiholi said, "Every five years, a representative is sent from the DCC Bank to Apex Bank. After discussions with the DCC Bank chairman and district in-charge minister, we selected Rahul. He will work to strengthen the connection between the DCC Bank and government facilities. This will benefit both the bank and the local community."

Rahul Jarkiholi, addressing the press for the first time after his selection, expressed gratitude and a sense of responsibility. "I thank the president, vice president, and all the directors who elected me. This is my first step into the cooperative sector. I will take expert advice and work sincerely to bring government schemes and facilities to Belagavi DCC Bank," he said.

The Jarkiholi family's influence in Belagavi politics remains strong, as this move marks another significant achievement for them in the cooperative sector. Meanwhile, the Kuruba community and other local groups await further developments regarding future leadership decisions at the bank.

With Rahul now in the role, political observers say this could reshape district politics and banking priorities in the coming years, highlighting the continuing power and reach of the Jarkiholi family in Belagavi.

State launches 'Door-to-Door Police' service initiative

GADAG

In a bid to make policing more people-friendly, the Karnataka government has launched the "Mane Mane Ge Police" initiative, aimed at transforming the traditional reactive police system into a proactive, community-focused model. The program seeks to strengthen the bond between the police and citizens while addressing modern challenges such as cybercrime, crimes against women and children, and drug abuse.

Under this initiative, police personnel will visit homes directly, raising awareness about laws, listening to complaints, and providing timely solutions. By engaging with the public at the local level, the department hopes to prevent suspicious activities, build trust, and promote a sense of safety in communities. The program also emphasizes the use of modern technology to improve efficiency and service delivery.

The initiative involves police visiting homes to raise legal awareness, address complaints, prevent crime, build trust, ensure community safety, and enhance efficiency through modern technology

The "door-to-door police" approach aims to make officers approachable, encouraging citizens to see them as friends rather than figures of fear. By involving the public, it hopes to instill a positive attitude toward law enforcement while fostering responsibility-sharing between citizens and police. The initiative also targets youth, guiding them toward productive activities and away from negative influences such as drug use.

In addition, the department plans legal awareness programs in schools and colleges, workshops on women's safety, and community meetings to educate citizens about crime prevention and civic responsibilities.

Officials said the program will help communities anticipate problems, respond quickly during emergencies, and ensure peace and order with active citizen participation. Through "Mane Mane Ge Police," Karnataka aims to create a safer, law-conscious society where citizens and police work together to prevent crime and maintain harmony.

Panchamasali Peeth declares December 10 as Anti-Atrocities Day

CHIKKODI

Jagadguru Basava Jaya Mrutyunjaya Swamiji of the Panchamasali Peeth has announced that December 10 will be observed as Anti-Atrocities Day. The day will mark a protest against the attack on Panchamasali community members who peacefully demanded 2A reservation in the last government session.

Speaking in Chikkodi town, Swamiji said, "We were peacefully protesting in front of Belgaum Suvarna Vidhana Soudha when the government, with the help of the police, attacked us illegally. Thousands of community members, including lawyers, MLAs, farmers, and laborers, participated. This attack was a huge insult to the entire Lingayat community."

He added that despite their demand for police action and an official apology, the government took no steps. "That is why we will observe December 10 as a day to remember these atrocities. The Panchamasali community will hold a silent procession from Gandhi Bhavan in Belgaum. Participants will wear black bands on their hands and mouths to show solidarity and send a message that such incidents must not happen," Swamiji said.

Swamiji also criticized Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's earlier remarks, stating that reservation requests were denied as "anti-constitutional." He emphasized, "We will continue our struggle in every taluk until the government calls us for talks. We will not approach them again for reservation until the CM himself invites us."

The Swamiji urged social partners and community members across the country to join the Gandhi Bhavan event at 10 am on December 10. "We call on legislators, activists, and all who care about justice to stand together. The goal is to ensure fairness and respect for our community," he said.

The announcement has sparked widespread attention in Belagavi, highlighting ongoing tensions over reservation policies and the Panchamasali community's determination to continue their peaceful fight for justice.

BJP plans massive farmer protest in Belagavi

BELAGAVI

The BJP will hold a large protest on December 9 in Belagavi, demanding solutions for farmers' issues and development in North Karnataka. Arabhavi MLA Balachandra Jarkiholi said around 20,000 farmers are expected to participate under the leadership of State President Vijayendra and Opposition Leader R. Ashok. Speaking at a press conference after the Belagavi district core committee meeting, Jarkiholi criticized the state government for delaying irrigation projects and withholding funds. He highlighted pending milk incentives of ₹600 crore and the slow release of funds for projects approved during Bommai's tenure.

Legislative Council Opposition Chief Whip N. Ravikumar demanded immediate opening of procurement centers for maize, cotton, urad, and togari pulses at Gram Panchayat level. He also called for compensation of ₹25,000 per acre for farmers in Raichur, Bellary, Vijayanagar, and Koppal, where water from Tungabhadra is being released to Andhra Pradesh, affecting second crops. Former MLA P. Rajeev stressed that farmers' issues and North Karnataka concerns should be raised on the opening day of the session. He criticized the government's handling of maize procurement, citing that only five quintals are bought per farmer.

Farmers plan a "Belagavi Chalo" protest on December 29, urging the government to buy remaining maize stock immediately

Davanagere farmers plan Belagavi protest over maize

DAVANAGERE

Farmers in Davanagere are up in arms as the state government has yet to start a maize procurement center in the district, despite repeated demands. Davanagere, a major maize-growing area, produces around six lakh metric tons of maize annually, but farmers are struggling to get fair prices. Market rates for maize have fallen to Rs 1,700–1,800 per quintal, while the Centre's minimum support price is Rs 2,400. Farmers are urging the state to add Rs 600 per quintal, effectively ensuring Rs 3,000 per quintal.

District Collector Dr. Gangadhar Swami said only grain-based distilleries in neighboring districts of Haveri, Belagavi, and Bagalkot are permitted to purchase maize.

The single ethanol factory in Davanagere has completed its three-month purchase period, but officials are trying to negotiate further purchases for local farmers. Meanwhile, KMF has agreed to procure 25 quintals per farmer, starting near Shikaripura, Honnali, and Nyamathi.

The delay in procurement has led farmers' groups to organize a "Belagavi Chalo" protest on December 29. Gummanur Basavaraj, president of the Green Army District and State Farmers' Association, said more than a thousand farmers will participate during the state assembly session. He criticized the government for purchasing only a small portion of the total maize produced, stressing that the remaining stock should be bought immediately to prevent further losses.

Farmers warn that without timely government action, debt and distress will rise, leaving maize growers struggling despite the district's significant production. The protest reflects growing frustration among farmers over procurement delays and declining market prices.

High alert for Belagavi session after Delhi blast

BELAGAVI

Following the November 10 bomb blast near Delhi's Red Fort, high alert has been declared across the country, impacting the upcoming winter session at Suvarna Vidhan Soudha in Belagavi. Security has been tightened with more measures than in previous years to ensure the safety of officials, MLAs, and visitors.

City Police Commissioner Bhushan Borase said a 3 km security radius under Section 163 has been imposed around the Soudha. Over 6,000 police personnel, including 16 officers with six IPS officers, will be deployed. Dog squads, bomb detection teams, and 11 drones will assist in maintaining security. Temporary accommodations, including a German tent city at Shindolli village, have been arranged for 2,500 officers, with warm blankets, hot water, and other facilities to counter the cold.

Since 2012, 27 cases of violence have been reported during previous sessions, and 47 protest applications have been received this year. Police will monitor gatherings closely and restrict large protests to maintain order. Measures have also been planned to prevent traffic disruptions on the national highway near the Soudha, which sees over 16,000 vehicles daily.

MLA Kashapanavara challenges former MLA

BAGALKOTE

MLA Vijayananda Kashapanavara has openly challenged former MLA Dodna Gowda Patil for a public debate, promising to expose alleged irregularities during Dodna Gowda's tenure with supporting documents. Speaking to the media at his Ilakal town office, Kashapanavara said, "If former MLA Doddanagouda comes forward for an open discussion on the illegal activities and extortion that happened during his tenure, I will provide proof with documents." Addressing state politics, he launched a sharp attack on opposition leaders, ridiculing BJP claims of a potential early election. "This is all a daydream. There is no unity in their party. Yeddyurappa and others are at odds, and there are too many rebels among them," he said.

On the Nati Koli negotiation issue, the MLA expressed confidence, asserting, "Nothing will happen to us. This government cannot affect us for the next five years. We will have our own CM and administration and aim to return to power in 2028."

Regarding the Chief Minister change speculation, he clarified, "Only our superiors—Rahul Gandhi, Kharge, and Sonia Gandhi—can think and decide on this. We have been instructed not to discuss it with the media."

Kashapanavara also discussed the upcoming cabinet expansion, noting that he submitted a petition to the CM and DCM advocating for deserving candidates.

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CHANGE OF NAME

I,SNEHA KALLAKKANAVAR (Old name) address: NEAR PLD BANK AT MADAKIHONNILLI DIST DHARWAD. Has changed my name: SNEHA RAMALINGAPPA KALLAKKANAVAR (New name) for all purposes. Vide Affidavit dated: 03/12/2025 before notary public Hubli.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, BASAVARAJ MAKALI (Old name) address: ANEGUNDI PLOT AT POST NAVALGUND. Has changed my name BASAVARAJ BALAVANTAPPA MAKALI (New name) for all purposes. Vide Affidavit dated: 02/12/2025 before notary public Hubli.

BETTER SCHOOL INFRASTRUCTURE

Government plans schools upgrade in Koppal villages

KOPPAL

The government will prepare a detailed plan in the next budget to improve basic facilities in government schools under Bevinahalli Gram Panchayat, assured Gram Panchayat Development Officer Geetha on Thursday.

Speaking at the Gram Sabha on Children's Rights held at Government Higher Primary School in Shahapura, Geetha said the plan would cover phased provision of essential facilities. These include playgrounds, compounds, electricity, drinking water, toilets, computer repairs, painting of school buildings, and other infrastructure improvements in schools across Bevinahalli, Lingadahalli, and Shahapura villages.

During the event, children from all three villages presented grievances and requests from their schools to the Gram Panchayat. Geetha interacted with the students and assured them that their concerns would be addressed promptly and systematically.

The joint meeting focused on children's rights, social audits, and comprehensive education. Gram Panchayat member Halappa Thota presided over the session, emphasizing the importance of involving children in school development discussions.

Several officials and community representatives attended the meeting, including School Reform Committee President Hullesh Sindogi, Koppal T.P.M. Social Audit Coordinator Eranna Salamani, Reeds Institute's Manjunath, District Children's Unit Ravi Badigera, A.N.M. Mallamma, SDMC Vice President Revathi Gonal, PLD Bank Director Lakshmi Devi Chowdhury, Gram Panchayat member Muralidhar, Secretary Shivananda Panthara, and School Principal Devaraj A.S.

Parents, villagers, and school children from the three villages actively participated, discussing children's rights and ways to improve education and facilities. The initiative aims to ensure better learning environments and infrastructure for all students in the Gram Panchayat region.

QUICK READ

'Bal Bhavan programs foster creative development'

Chitradurga

Bal Bhavan programs effectively complement children's creative and extracurricular activities, stated Veena, Child Development Project Officer of Chitradurga. She was speaking at the inauguration of a children's art talent program organised at Buddhanagar Government Senior Primary School. The event was conducted jointly by the State Bal Bhavan Society, District Panchayat, Women and Child Development Department, and the District Bal Bhavan Committee. Veena emphasised that children should engage in activities that support their academic learning while also nurturing creativity and discipline. Alongside formal education, Bal Bhavan activities help children learn self-discipline, respect, and patience, which are essential for holistic development, she remarked.

Farmers advised to regularize electricity for irrigation wells

Chikkaballapur

Farmers in Chikkaballapur and Chintamani divisions have been advised to regularize electricity connections for their irrigation wells, according to the Executive Engineer (Electrical) of the BEVCOM office. Farmers who have already paid ₹50 and obtained an RR number from BEVCOM are using electricity for irrigation wells. The Government of Karnataka, following BEVCOM orders, has instructed farmers who have paid the ₹50 infrastructure fee to complete payment by December 31 to ensure legal electricity connections for their irrigation wells. This move aims to provide a proper and lawful framework for electricity usage in agriculture.

12,813 candidates to appear for Karnataka TET on Dec 7

Chitradurga district to host Karnataka Teacher Eligibility Test with over twelve thousand candidates, officials stress smooth conduct

CHITRADURGA

The Karnataka Teacher Eligibility Test (TET) 2025 is scheduled to be conducted on December 7 at the district centre in Chitradurga, with a total of 12,813 candidates registered for Paper-1 and Paper-2 combined. Ahead of the examination, the Additional District Commissioner, B.T. Kumaraswamy, instructed all examination centre officials to strictly follow the prescribed rules to ensure a smooth process and prevent inconvenience to candidates.

Presiding over a pre-examination preparation meeting at the District Commissioner's office on Thursday, Kumaraswamy emphasised that Chief Superintendents of exam centres must enforce regulations diligently. The objective is to provide a hassle-free experience for candidates and avoid the kind of long queues and chaos witnessed during previous KPSC examinations, he noted.

The TET schedule has been fixed with Paper-1 from 9:30 AM to 12:00 PM, and Paper-2 from 2:00 PM to 4:30 PM on December 7. Comprehensive verification of candidates, including checking identity documents and admission card photographs, will take place from 7:00 AM to 9:00 AM for the morning session and 12:15 PM to 1:30 PM for the afternoon session. Staff for these procedures will be deployed by the Centralised Records Unit.

Kumaraswamy further instructed that if any verification personnel fail to report on time, the Chief Superintendent should assign alternative staff to complete the process and ensure all candidates are admitted without delay. Candidates are also advised to reach their respective exam centres well in advance, as detailed instructions have been provided on their admission cards.

In addition to procedural arrangements, authorities have directed a strong police presence to maintain order and security at the centres. The administration has stressed that exam centres should avoid any circumstances that could lead to crowding or disruptions, ensuring that the Teacher Eligibility Test proceeds efficiently and fairly for all 12,813 candidates.

Admin initiates measures to improve SSLC Results

CHIKKABALLAPUR

District officials implement targeted programs, special classes, and learning materials to enhance SSLC results this year

The district administration is taking proactive steps to improve the SSLC results for 10th-grade students. District Commissioner P.N. Ravindra advised officials and teachers to identify academically weaker students and provide them with special skill-based interventions and focused classes to enhance their performance.

Speaking at the SSLC progress review meeting held at the District Administration Building on Thursday, Ravindra highlighted that the state curriculum's SSLC final examinations will begin on March 18, with 14,449 students appearing this year. Schools across the district have already completed teaching the syllabus, and revision classes are underway to ensure students are well-prepared.

Based on recent internal assessments, government schools recorded a pass percentage of 56%, aided schools 59%, residential schools 84%, and unaided schools 86%. If these trends continue, the district risks underperforming in the final SSLC results. To address this, 56 out of 111 government schools have been adopted by district-level officers, who are implementing strategic measures to boost results.

Additionally, in collaboration with Adani Group's cement plant in Tondabay, short textbooks based on learning assessment (LBA) methodology have been printed and distributed among students needing extra support. These books, designed with expert guidance, simplify the syllabus and help students understand concepts more effectively, thereby facilitating better learning outcomes.

Ravindra emphasized that no student is inherently incapable of learning; distractions in the surrounding environment and family conditions often affect focus. He urged strict monitoring of attendance and engagement, ensuring students devote full attention to practice exercises. Teachers are encouraged to use model question papers and focused teaching methods to guide students toward success.

District Chief Executive Officer Dr. Y. Naveen Bhat instructed that officers adopting schools should visit at least once a week to monitor teaching methods and learning environments. Greater emphasis should be placed on students at risk of failing, with systematic practice and remedial teaching.

The short LBA textbooks for the 10th-grade state curriculum were formally released during the meeting, with officials including Adani Group Plant Manager Prashant Deshmukh, District Panchayat Deputy Secretary Atik Pasha, and Deputy Director of School Education V. Ramesh in attendance.

Protest in Tumakuru demands GP be appointed as CM

TUMAKURU

A protest was held in the city demanding that Home Minister Parameshwar be appointed as the next Chief Minister. Local participants gathered to express their support for the minister and emphasized his leadership qualities and administrative experience.

The demonstrators carried banners and raised slogans calling for Parameshwar's elevation to the state's top post. Organizers stated that the minister's work in public service, law and order, and development initiatives make him a suitable candidate for the Chief Ministerial position.

Authorities monitored the protest, ensuring it remained peaceful while allowing citizens to exercise their right to assemble. Police officials maintained order and guided traffic to minimize disruption in the city.

The protest reflects growing political interest and engagement among local residents, highlighting public sentiment regarding leadership choices within the state government. While no formal statement has been issued by the ruling party regarding the demand, supporters continue to voice their opinions through such demonstrations.

Observers noted that such protests are likely to increase as political discussions around the Chief Ministerial position gain momentum in the coming weeks.

Kavita C awarded PhD by Bharathiar University

CHIKKABALLAPUR

Kavita C, an assistant professor at Nagarjuna College of Management, Chikkaballapur, has been conferred with a Doctorate in Commerce by Bharathiar University, Coimbatore. This recognition comes in acknowledgment of her significant research contributions in the field of education management and human resources.

Her doctoral research, titled Deployment of Human Resources in Educational Institutions of Bengaluru in the Context of Teaching Concept, explores how educational institutions in Bengaluru manage and utilise human resources to enhance teaching effectiveness. The study provides insights into administrative practices, staff deployment strategies, and their impact on overall institutional performance.

Kavita conducted her research under the supervision of Dr. R. Nagalakshmi, Associate Professor at VET College of Arts and Science, Tindle – Erode. The guidance provided by Dr. Nagalakshmi was pivotal in shaping the analytical framework and methodology of the dissertation.

Expressing her satisfaction at the achievement, Kavita stated that the research aims to contribute practical recommendations for administrators of educational institutions to optimise human resource management, ensuring better teaching outcomes and institutional growth.

Cooperative Ratna Awards ceremony scheduled on Dec 6

TUMAKURU

The Karnataka State Cooperative Department has announced that the Cooperative Ratna Awards ceremony will be held in Tumakuru on December 6. The event aims to recognize and honor individuals and organizations that have made significant contributions to the cooperative sector in the state. Director of the Karnataka State Cooperative Board, Ganganna, will preside over the ceremony in the city. The awards highlight exemplary service, innovative initiatives, and commitment to cooperative principles, fostering growth and development in the sector. Officials stated that the event will bring together cooperative leaders, government representatives, and community members to celebrate achievements and encourage continued excellence.

District records 224 cases in tobacco-free youth campaign

CHITRADURGA

As part of the Tobacco-Free Youth Campaign 3.0, the District Tobacco Control Cell conducted extensive awareness and enforcement activities from October 10 to November 30. The initiative involved district- and taluk-level inspection teams visiting urban areas and villages to educate youth and monitor tobacco vendors, resulting in 224 registered cases and fines totalling Rs. 28,100.

The campaign aimed to prevent young people from falling prey to the harmful effects of tobacco and to raise awareness about the negative health consequences associated with its use. Shop owners were advised not to sell tobacco products to minors, and youth were cautioned against smoking in public places or chewing pan masala and tobacco.

During the period, authorities ensured compliance with Sections 4, 6A, and 6B of the COTPA Act by sensitising shopkeepers about mandatory signage. Under Section 4, 155 cases were recorded with fines of Rs. 17,950; under Section 6A, 50 cases incurred Rs. 6,200 in penalties; and under Section 6B, 19 cases led to Rs. 3,950 in fines.

Apart from enforcement, the campaign organised 15 tobacco-related operations, 35 IEC (Information, Education, Communication) programs across villages, eight training sessions for health and other departmental staff, one district-level coordination committee meeting, and one taluk-level coordination committee meeting. Notably, Kallenahalli village in Chitradurga taluk was declared a tobacco-free village. Awareness initiatives were also conducted in 40 schools and colleges, along with two community

8 murder cases reported in Anekal taluk in 1 month

ANEKAL

Anekal taluk has reported a disturbing rise in violent crime, with eight murder cases recorded across various police station limits in the past month. Police sources said most incidents in November were linked to personal disputes. Attibele registered three murders, Hebbagodi and Sarjapur two each, and Bannerghatta one. One of the most shocking cases involved Srinath, an IT employee from Neralur village, who was killed in a dramatic, cinematic manner in Kuppam. Another case under Attibele limits involved Balaraman, a Tamil Nadu native living in Ballur village, who was murdered over a trivial issue; his wife Vidya also died after he allegedly administered an injection during a family dispute. Police confirmed that three murders reported in November occurred under Attibele jurisdiction. In Hebbagodi limits, Ravi Prasad Reddy has been accused of kidnapping Madesh and Balappa Reddy for extortion and murdering them after collecting money, heightening concerns about rising crime in the area.

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BANGALORE RURAL ZILLA PANCHAYATH
Office of Executive Engineer, Panchayath Raj Engineering Division, Bangalore Rural, Anand Rao Circle, Bangalore - 560009.

No: EE/PRED/BNG(R)/TND No-11/TS/2025-26 Date: 01-12-2025

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION No.11/2025-26
(Through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal Only)

Short Term Tender is invited through KPP Portal by the Executive Engineer, P.R.E.D, Bangalore Rural, under Zilla Panchayat Head of Accounts. The Work details can be obtained from the KPP Portal **(https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in).** The Tender Documents can be obtained and submitted on or before **10-12-2025 upto 5.00 PM.** Further details contact this office during office working hours.

Sd/- Executive Engineer,
Panchayat Raj Engineering Division,
Bangalore Rural Dist. Bangalore

DIPR/CP/4213/SPAN COM/2025-26

Change of Name

I R SHASHANK S/o H H RAMAPPA, R/o 459 3 rd Main, 5th Cross, Opposite to Muneshwara Temple, Flower Garden, Babusapalaya, Bengaluru Karnataka 560043, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SHASHANK RAMAPPA.

Change of Name

I VIJETA BELANDOR D/o VITTAL BELANDOR, R/o 601,Vaishnavi Symphony Apts, No. 100, 6th Main, 11th Cross, Malleshwaram, Bangalore, Karnataka - 560003, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as VIJETA VITTAL BELANDOR.

Change of Name

It is for general information that I, R PARIMAL KRISHAN S/O RAJASEKAR, R/O A2 403 Iscon Flower, Ghuma Bopal Road, Ghuma, Ahmedabad, Gujarat 380058, declare that name of mine has been wrongly written as R PARIMAL KRISHNA in my minor daughter namely P SAI VRITIKA, aged 14 years in her birth certificate No. COC/2011/05/066/001680/0. The actual name of mine is R PARIMAL KRISHAN, which may be amended accordingly.

Change of Name

I ANAND KALASAPUR S/O SHESHACHARYA, R/O #34, 2nd Cross Renuka Nagar, Hubli, Udyamnagar, Dharwad, Karnataka-580030, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as ANANDTEERTH KALASAPUR.

NAME CHANGE

I, **BIBI NAEYMATH NASSER**, D/o Syed Nasser, resident of No 5/2-9, 4th Floor, Aalco Gardenia, 1st A Cross, Benson A Cross, Near Family Super Market, Benson Town, Bengaluru - 560046, Have changed my name to **BIBI NAEYMATH**, vide affidavit dated: 04.12.2025, before Notary G. DAYANANDA, Bangalore

NAME CHANGE

I, **MANASA,** residing at Sri Sathya Sai University Girls' Hostel, Nallakadirenahalli campus, Chickaballapura District, Karanataka 561211 have changed my name to **MANASA N,** for all future purposes vide affidavit dated 4-Dec-2025 sworn before notary P V Ramachandra Reddy.

Change of Name

I MIR HUSSAIN ALI S/O MIRZA SIKANDAR ALI BAIG, R/O # 23, Durvesh Heaven, 3rd Floor, T-2 Flat, Rose Garden, Neelasandra, Viveknagar, Bangalore, Karnataka - 560047, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as AAYAN ALI.

AFFIDAVIT

I, **SRI. GOUTHAM. B. M,** Aged about 27 years, S/o. Sri. Munindra. B. S, Residing at: No. 62, 1st Main Road, Byatarayanapura, Sahakaranagara Post, Bangalore- 560 092 do hereby declare that that my Father's names **"MUNINDRA. B. S" and "MUNENDRA. B. S"** belongs / refers to my father and is of one and the same person and there are no discrepancies in the same. Vide affidavit dated 04/12/2025 sworn before G.R. Ravichandra Reddy Advocate & Notary Govt. of India. Bengaluru.

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರ್ಕಾರ
ಸಹಾಯಕ ಅರಣ್ಯ ಸಂರಕ್ಷಣಾಧಿಕಾರಿ ಹುಣಸೂರು
ವನ್ಯಜೀವಿ ಉಪ ವಿಭಾಗ, ಹುಣಸೂರು
e-mail: acfhunsurwlsd2020@gmail.com
ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ/ಸ.ಅ.ಸಂ./ಹುವಲು/ರೈಬಾ/ಟೆಂಡರ್/ ಸಿಆರ್–09/2025–26
ದಿನಾಂಕ: 20.11.2025

ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಅಧಿಸೂಚನೆ

ಈ ಮೂಲಕ ಸಾರ್ವಜನಿಕರಿಗೆ ತಿಳಿಯಪಡಿಸುವುದೇನೆಂದರೆ 2025–26ನೇ ಸಾಲಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಹುಣಸೂರು ವನ್ಯಜೀವಿ ಉಪ ವಿಭಾಗದ ಆನೆಚೌಕೂರು ಮತ್ತು ವೀರನಹೊಸಹಳ್ಳಿ ವನ್ಯಜೀವಿ ವಲಯದ ವ್ಯಾಪ್ತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ **"ಸ್ಯಾಂಡರ್ಡ್ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಡಾಕ್ಯುಮೆಂಟ್ ಕೆ.ಡಬ್ಲ್ಯೂ–3/4ರಲ್ಲಿನ ಷರತ್ತುಗಳಿಗನುಗುಣವಾಗಿ"** ಈ ಕೆಳಕಂಡ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳಿಗೆ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರ್ಕಾರದ ಇ–ಪ್ರೊಕ್ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ (https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in) ಮೂಲಕ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಕರೆಯಲಾಗಿದೆ

ಉಪಯೋಗಿತ ರೈಲ್ವೆ ಹಳಿಗಳನ್ನು ಖರೀದಿಸಿ ಆನೆ ತಡೆ ಬ್ಯಾರಿಕೇಡ್ ನಿರ್ಮಿಸುವುದು 11.514.ಮೀ (7 ಯುನಿಟ್) 1,856.83 ಲಕ್ಷಗಳು*

(* ಸರ್ಕಾರದಿಂದ ಅನುದಾನ ಬಿಡುಗಡೆ ಮಾಡುವ ನಿರೀಕ್ಷೆ ಮೇರೆಗೆ)

ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಲು ಕೊನೆಯ ದಿನಾಂಕ ಮತ್ತು ಸಮಯ: 20.12.2025 ಸಂಜೆ 4:00 ಗಂಟೆ. ಸದರಿ ದಿನಾಂಕದಂದು ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಆಗದ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳಿಗೆ ಸಂಬಂಧಿಸಿದಂತೆ ಮರು ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಲು ಕೊನೆ ದಿನಾಂಕ: ಮತ್ತು ಸಮಯ: 30.12.2025 ಸಂಜೆ 4:00 ಗಂಟೆ. ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ಮಾಹಿತಿಗಾಗಿ ಈ ಕೆಳಗೆ ಸಹಿ ಮಾಡಿರುವವರ ಕಛೇರಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಕಛೇರಿ ಕೆಲಸದ ವೇಳೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಪಡೆಯಬಹುದು. ದೂರವಾಣಿ: 08222–252041

ಸಹಿ/– ಸಹಾಯಕ ಅರಣ್ಯ ಸಂರಕ್ಷಣಾಧಿಕಾರಿ,
ಹುಣಸೂರು ವನ್ಯಜೀವಿ ಉಪ ವಿಭಾಗ, ಹುಣಸೂರು,
DIPR/DDMYS/1315/KSMCA/740/2025-26

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರ್ಕಾರ
ಮೈಸೂರು ಅರಮನೆ ಮಂಡಳಿ
ಕಾರ್ಯನಿರ್ವಾಹಕ ಅಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳ ಕಛೇರಿ, ಮೈಸೂರು ಅರಮನೆ ಮಂಡಳಿ, ಮೈಸೂರು.
ದೂರವಾಣಿ: 0821–2421051, ಫ್ಯಾಕ್ಸ್: 2434425, ಇ–ಮೇಲ್: ddmysorepalace@gmail.com
ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಅಧಿಸೂಚನೆ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: EO/MPB/DD/HORTI/FS/T.NO.06/2025-26 ದಿನಾಂಕ: 25.11.2025

ಇ–ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ (ದ್ವಿಲಕೋಟೆ ಪದ್ಧತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ) ಕೆ.ಪಿ.ಪಿ.ಪಿ. ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮೂಲಕ ಮಾತ್ರ

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರ್ಕಾರದ ರಾಜ್ಯಪಾಲರ ಪರವಾಗಿ ಉಪನಿರ್ದೇಶಕರು, ಮೈಸೂರು ಅರಮನೆ ಮಂಡಳಿ, ಮೈಸೂರು ರವರು, ಮೈಸೂರು ಅರಮನೆಯ ತೋಟಗಾರಿಕೆ ವಿಭಾಗಕ್ಕೆ ಸಂಬಂಧಿಸಿದಂತೆ ಒಟ್ಟು ಮೊತ್ತ ರೂ. 105.00 ಲಕ್ಷದ ಫಲಪುಷ್ಪ ಪ್ರದರ್ಶನದ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಯನ್ನು ಕೈಗೊಳ್ಳುವ ಸಂಬಂಧ ನೋಂದಾಯಿತ ಅರ್ಹ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರು /ಏಜೆನ್ಸಿ / ತಯಾರಕರು / ಸಂಸ್ಥೆಯಿಂದ ಕೆ.ಪಿ.ಪಿ.ಪಿ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮೂಲಕ ಮಾತ್ರ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ. **(1)** ವಿದ್ಯುನ್ಮಾನ (ಇ–ಟೆಂಡರ್) ವ್ಯವಸ್ಥೆ ಮುಖಾಂತರ ಮಾತ್ರ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಲು ಕೊನೆಯ ದಿನಾಂಕ ಮತ್ತು ಸಮಯ: **10.12.2025 ಸಂಜೆ 5.00 ಗಂಟೆಯವರೆಗೆ, (2)** ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ನ ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಬಿಡ್ ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ ಮತ್ತು ಸಮಯ: **11.12.2025 ಬೆಳಿಗ್ಗೆ 11.00 ಗಂಟೆಯ ನಂತರ, (3)** ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ನ ಆರ್ಥಿಕ ಬಿಡ್ ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ ಮತ್ತು ಸಮಯ: **12.12.2025 ಬೆಳಿಗ್ಗೆ 11.00 ಗಂಟೆಯ ನಂತರ ಅಥವಾ ನಂತರ ದಿನಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ತೆರೆಯಲಾಗುವುದು,** ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ನ ನಿಬಂಧನೆಗಳು, ಷರತ್ತುಗಳು ಹಾಗೂ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಯ ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ವಿವರಗಳಿಗೆ **http://www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in.** ಅಂತರ್ಜಾಲದಲ್ಲಿ ಅಥವಾ ಈ ಕಛೇರಿಯ ಕೆಲಸದ ವೇಳೆಯ ಎಲ್ಲಾ ದಿನಗಳಂದು ಪಡೆಯಬಹುದು. ಒಂದು ವೇಳೆ ಮೇಲೆ ನೀಡಲಾಗಿರುವ ದಿನಗಳು ಸಾರ್ವಜನಿಕ ರಜಾ ದಿನಗಳಾಗಿದ್ದಲ್ಲಿ ಆ ನಂತರದ ದಿನಗಳನ್ನು ಪರಿಗಣಿಸಲಾಗುವುದು.

ಸಹಿ/–
ಉಪ ನಿರ್ದೇಶಕರು,
ಪಾಸಾಸಂಇ/ಮೈಸೂರು/ತಿರಡಿ ಸಾಯಿ/1328/2025–26 ಮೈಸೂರು ಅರಮನೆ ಮಂಡಳಿ, ಮೈಸೂರು

QUICK READ

Intense cold wave sweeps across Kashmir

SRINAGAR

Intense cold wave continued across Kashmir Valley on Thursday as minimum temperature remained several notches below the freezing point. The morning fog and clear night sky added to the chill factor in Srinagar city this morning as pedestrians and motorists moved out with caution to negotiate the slippery streets and roads in the city. The Meteorological (MeT) Department officials said the minimum temperature was minus 4 degrees Celsius in Srinagar city, while it was minus 4.8 degrees Celsius in Pahalgam and minus one in Gulmarg.

Kerala theatre CCTV leak sparks security scare

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

A major cyber-security breach has rattled Kerala's film exhibition sector after CCTV footage from government-owned theatres surfaced on pornographic websites and encrypted social media platforms. The leaked visuals, allegedly from inside the Kairali, Sree, and Nila theatres in Thiruvananthapuram, show ordinary moviegoers seated together with images that were never meant to be public and have now triggered a high-level probe. The footage, believed to have been uploaded to paid adult websites before spreading to Telegram, X, and other digital channels, prominently displays the Kerala State Film Development Corporation (KSFDC) logo on theatre seats, leaving little doubt about the source.

T'gana, AP CMs hail Indian Navy for exemplary service

HYDERABAD

Chief Ministers of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh on Thursday greeted the Indian Navy on Navy Day. Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy, Andhra Pradesh Governor S. Abdul Nazeer, Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu, and other leaders greeted the Navy personnel and their families on the occasion. Telangana Chief Minister conveyed his heartfelt greetings to the personnel of the Indian Navy, who tirelessly safeguard the nation and exemplify extraordinary bravery. On the occasion of Navy Day, he extended his warm commendations for their exemplary service.

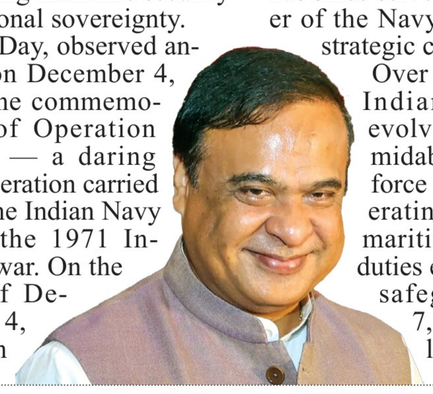
Assam CM salutes Indian Navy's courage and commitment

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma honoured the Indian Navy on Navy Day, praising its courage and commitment to national security

GUWAHATI

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Thursday paid heartfelt tributes to the Indian Navy on the occasion of Navy Day, lauding the force for its bravery, discipline and unwavering dedication to protecting the nation's maritime interests.

In a message posted on X, the Chief Minister wrote: On #NavyDay, we salute the courage, discipline and unmatched commitment of our Naval warriors who keep India's seas safe, strong and sovereign. From our vast coastline to the farthest oceans, our Nation stands proud of their unwavering service and sacrifice. His message resonated with the sentiments across the nation as people expressed pride and gratitude for the Navy's role in ensuring maritime security and national sovereignty.



Navy Day, observed annually on December 4, marks the commemoration of Operation Trident — a daring naval operation carried out by the Indian Navy during the 1971 Indo-Pak war. On the night of December 4, Indian missile boats launched a surprise attack on Karachi harbour, causing extensive damage to Pakistan's naval infrastructure and establishing one of India's most significant maritime victories. The day has since served as a reminder of the Navy's valour and strategic capability.

Over the years, the Indian Navy has evolved into a formidable blue-water force capable of operating across vast maritime zones. Its duties extend beyond safeguarding the 7,500-km coastline to protecting island territories, securing vital sea lanes of communication and fostering international maritime cooperation through joint exercises and defence partnerships.

The Navy also plays a crucial role in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations, responding swiftly to cyclones, tsunamis and emergencies within India and abroad.

In recent times, the Navy has accelerated its indigenisation efforts under the 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' initiative, with advanced warships, submarines and maritime systems being developed in Indian shipyards.

M'rashtra grants legal status to digital land records

MUMBAI

In a major push toward transparent and citizen-friendly governance, the Maharashtra government has granted full legal validity to Digital 7/12 extracts and other essential land records, including 8-A and Ferfar (Mutation) documents. Revenue Minister Chandrashekhar Bawankule announced on Thursday that a government resolution (GR) has been issued to implement new Rules for Digital Land Records under the Maharashtra Land Measurement and Record Keeping Act, 2025. Calling it a massive leap in E-Governance, Minister Bawankule highlighted that citizens will no longer need to rely on physical paperwork or stand in long queues. There will be Trust Through Tech as extracts like 7/12, 8A, and Mutation (Ferfar) are secured with a Digital Signature, QR Code, and a 16-digit verification number. Talathi's stamp is not required. Anyone can get an official and verified extract for just Rs 15. The digital extracts will be acceptable for all government work. This is our commitment to transparency, speed, and ease of business, he said.

Maharashtra government has approved full legal validity for digitally signed 7/12 and related land records to boost e-governance.

According to the GR, the state has initiated implementation of the new Act by framing detailed procedures for measuring village land and preparing updated, authenticated digital land records. The rules standardise the process for record authentication, mandating digital signatures of Land Revenue Officers on official documents.

Citizens can now obtain or correct land documents through two methods: an online application via the official Mahabhumi Portal (digitalbaliraja.mahabhumi.gov.in) or offline through Village Revenue Officers (Gram Mahsul Adhikari) and Tahsildar offices. The government said this would significantly reduce manual processing and modernise land administration across the state.

The GR also explains the importance of the 7/12 extract, a combined record of ownership (Form VII) and agricultural details (Form XII), widely used in rural Maharashtra to verify land ownership, survey data, crop information and for transactions, loans and dispute resolution.

Delhi Police held a specialised workshop for Aerocity hotel security staff to boost anti-narcotics vigilance and strengthen coordinated enforcement

Police train Aerocity Hotels for anti-narcotics vigilance

NEW DELHI

Reinforcing the Centre's 'Zero Tolerance' policy on drug abuse and trafficking, the Delhi Police on Thursday conducted a dedicated training and awareness workshop for hotel security personnel in Aerocity, one of Delhi's busiest hospitality hubs.

The initiative, carried out by the Anti-Narcotics Task Force (ANTF) of the Crime Branch, sought to improve vigilance among private security teams and enhance coordination between law enforcement agencies and commercial establishments.

Officials said approximately 85 Chief Security Officers (CSOs) from 11 major hotels in the Aerocity zone attended the session.

The workshop is part of Delhi Police's broader campaign to curb narcotics-related crimes through strategic operations, grassroots awareness efforts, and capacity-building programmes. The training was led by ACP Anil Shram from the Narco Coordination Centre (NCORD) and Inspector Rakesh Duhan of the ANTF. Participants were briefed on the existing drug landscape in the Capital, including commonly trafficked narcotics, behavioural and physical indicators of drug abuse, and the primary source states that supply illegal substances to Delhi. Officers also highlighted the serious health impacts of narcotics consumption, stressing the need for collective vigilance to prevent and report any suspicious activities.

A key highlight of the workshop was the introduction of the MANAS portal (1933), a confidential reporting platform designed to allow citizens and private entities to share drug-related information securely. Officials demonstrated its functionality and underscored the strong anonymity safeguards, encouraging hotel security units to use the portal without hesitation.

To reinforce commitment to the cause, all attendees took the Anti-Drugs e-Pledge.

The initiative received strong appreciation from participants, including former ACP Abhirup Banerji, now Consultant Security with Delhi International Airport Ltd, and Naveen Sehgal, AGM (Aerocity Security). Both praised the proactive steps taken by Delhi Police to involve private security agencies in combating the drug menace in a high-footfall commercial district.

'Bengal has turned into 'no-go zone' for industries under TMC'

KOLKATA

West Bengal, under the misrule of Trinamool Congress-led Mamata government, has become a no-go zone for industries, resulting in depleting investments and high unemployment, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) said. Bengal is bleeding jobs. Bengal is losing investment. Bengal is being pushed 20 years backward. While other states are attracting global investors, West Bengal has become a no-go zone for industry under TMC misrule, observed BJP Information Technology Cell chief and the party's central observer for West Bengal, Amit Malviya, in a social media post on Thursday morning. He made the remarks referring to the recent statistics provided by the Union Ministry of Commerce on the flight of companies from West Bengal. According to him, West Bengal was witnessing a mass exodus of companies, and the situation is far worse than what the Trinamool Congress government tries to hide. Quoting the Union Ministry of Commerce figures, he claimed that while a total of 207 companies have left West Bengal in just the last six months.

TN govt challenges judge's order on Karthigai Deepam case

MADURAI

The Tamil Nadu government has defended its actions before the Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court, arguing that Justice Swaminathan had exceeded his jurisdiction in ordering that Karthigai Deepam be lit at the hilltop lamp post on Thiruparankundram Hill and directing the deployment of CISF personnel for security. The controversy began after a petition was filed seeking permission to light the traditional Karthigai Deepam at the lamp post on the hill, which is one of the six barrack areas at Thiruparankundram.

Acting on the plea, the judge directed that the Maha Deepam be lit at the hilltop and asked the temple administration to make arrangements. Although preliminary preparations were made, the temple authorities abruptly cancelled the arrangements. The withdrawal triggered protests by Hindu Makkal Katchi, Akhila Bharath Hanuman Sena, South India Forward Bloc, and other organisations, who marched demanding that the lamp be lit at the lamp post, as requested by the petitioner. However, following temple tradition, the Deepam was lit at 6 p.m. near the Uchchipillaiyar Temple on the hilltop, not at the lamp post. Unsatisfied, the petitioner and others urged that the Deepam be lit at the lamp post with CISF protection. Justice Swaminathan issued an order permitting them to proceed to the spot with security personnel. The order led to tense scenes. BJP cadres and Hindu outfit members raised slogans near the 16-foot hall and attempted to scale the hill after breaking barricades. Police intervened, resulting in clashes in which two policemen sustained injuries.

Several districts record below 10 degrees in Rajasthan

JAIPUR

Cold wave gripped Rajasthan, with several cities recording temperatures below ten degrees Celsius. Fatehpur recorded the lowest temperature at 2.2 degrees Celsius, followed by Lunaksar at 2.9 degrees Celsius. Most cities reported minimum temperatures below 10 degrees Celsius, intensifying winter conditions.

Vanasthali recorded 7.8 degrees Celsius minimum temperature, Alwar (5.0 degrees Celsius), Pilani (5.4 degrees Celsius), Sikar (3.8 degrees Celsius), Karauli (6.3 degrees Celsius), Dausa (4.8 degrees Celsius), Jhunjhunu (6.1 degrees Celsius), Nagaur (4.0 degrees Celsius). Meanwhile, the Meteorological Department has forecast a cold wave alert for three days, beginning Thursday.

It warned that cold conditions will intensify and issued a yellow alert in parts of the state. A yellow alert has been issued for Sikar, Churu, and Jhunjhunu on December 4 and 5 due to expected cold-wave conditions. According to Radheshyam Sharma, Director of the Jaipur Meteorological Centre, weather conditions will remain clear across the state over the next week, but cold winds are expected to strengthen further.

Night temperatures are likely to fall by another 1–2 degrees Celsius in the next 24 to 48 hours. Meanwhile, besides minimum temperature, maximum temperatures also saw a noticeable drop, with all cities recording below 30 degrees Celsius. Sirohi was the coldest during the day at 21.6 degrees Celsius, while cities such as Sriganganagar, Phalodi, Bikaner, Churu, Karauli, and Hanumangarh recorded below-average day temperatures.

Cold winds intensified the chill in the air in the Shekhawati belt, where temperatures dropped to 6 degrees Celsius in some areas. The Meteorological Department expects the cold wave conditions to continue for the next two days, with northern Rajasthan likely to witness the sharpest decline. Residents have been advised to take necessary precautions as temperatures continue to fall.

Indian crew member freed after months in Houthi captivity

NEW DELHI

India on Thursday welcomed the release of Indian crew member Anilkumar Raveendran, an Army veteran from Kayamkulam in Kerala who had been held captive by Houthi rebels in conflict-ravaged Yemen. Raveendran, 52, a native of Pathiyoor, had been detained by security forces under the Houthi-controlled Yemeni administration since July 7. He was working as a security officer aboard the Liberian-flagged cargo vessel MV Eternity C when it was attacked and eventually sunk in the Red Sea. The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), announcing his release, said, Government of India welcomes the release of Indian crew member Mr Anilkumar Raveendran, who was on the ship MV Eternity C and under detention in Yemen since 07 July 2025. The ministry confirmed that Raveendran reached Muscat, Oman and is expected to return to India shortly. It added that Government of India had been coordinating efforts with various parties to ensure his safe release and return.

SIR IN WEST BENGAL

50 lakh names marked for potential deletion in WB

KOLKATA

In a major development ahead of the 2026 electoral cycle, nearly 50 lakh names in West Bengal have been identified for possible exclusion from the voters' list during the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) being conducted by the Election Commission of India (ECI). The revision process, which began on November 4, involves the digitisation and scrutiny of enumeration forms to update and correct voter records across the state. According to officials from the Chief Electoral Officer's (CEO) office in West Bengal, the number of names marked for exclusion has risen sharply in just 24 hours. While digitisation trends on Tuesday evening placed the figure slightly above 46 lakh, the count climbed to nearly 50 lakh by indicating an addition of around four lakh names within a single day. Of the total names identified so far, over 23 lakh fall under the deceased voters category, making it the largest segment flagged for removal. This is followed by more than 18 lakh voters listed under the shifted category. Additionally, over seven lakh names have been marked as untraceable, while the remaining cases include duplicate entries and other discrepancies requiring deletion. Election officials emphasise that these trends are preliminary, and the final number of deletions will be confirmed after the publication of the draft voters' list on December 16. This will kick off the notice phase, during which electoral registration officers (EROs) will issue notices, conduct hearings, verify claims, and process objections. The phase will run concurrently from December 16 to February 7, 2026. Subsequently, the checking of electoral roll parameters and securing ECI's approval for the final list will take place on February 10, 2026. The final electoral roll, earlier scheduled for February 7, will now be published on February 14.

QUICK READ

Rising egg price may affect its availability in Bengal schools'

KOLKATA

Mid-day meals in government schools of West Bengal may lack eggs due to the price hike, Anganwadi workers said. While the government allocation for each egg is only six and a half rupees, it is becoming increasingly difficult to provide food with eggs in Anganwadi centres as the retail price of each egg has increased to Rs 8. As a result, Anganwadi workers and helpers have been vocal about increasing the government allocation for eggs. Members of the Independent Anganwadi Workers and Helpers Association have submitted a deputation to the officials of the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) office in Mal Bazar of Jalpaiguri district.

MP boasts 32 cheetahs in just 3 yrs: CM Yadav

BHOPAL

As the number of cheetahs has risen to 32 in three years in Madhya Pradesh, India celebrated the International Cheetah Day with renewed commitment to conservation, awareness, and habitat protection for the world's fastest land animal. Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Dr Mohan Yadav shared a message on X, congratulating citizens on International Cheetah Day. He highlighted that the Cheetah Project, initiated in the state under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has opened a new chapter in India's wildlife conservation journey. The Chief Minister announced that the cheetah population in Madhya Pradesh has now risen to 32, reaffirming the state's commitment to ensuring that all wildlife remains safe and protected.

Guwahati launches mobile app to enhance judicial access

Kohima Bench of Gauhati High Court launched its first official mobile app to improve judicial access, transparency and citizen convenience

GUWAHATI

In a landmark move for the region, the Kohima Bench of the Gauhati High Court has launched its official mobile application, the GHCKB App—making it the first High Court bench in the Northeast to introduce such a digital service. Officials announced on Thursday that the initiative aims to enhance accessibility, transparency and convenience in the justice delivery system.

The app was formally launched by Chief Justice Ashutosh Kumar of the Gauhati High Court, in the presence of Justices Sanjay Kumar Medhi and Arun Dev Choudhury, along with other senior officials. Addressing the gathering, Chief Justice Ashutosh Kumar praised the Kohima Bench's ICT team, noting that the app was developed entirely in-house and reflects the bench's commitment to embracing technology-driven judicial processes. Describing the GHCKB App as citizen-friendly, he emphasised that it provides real-time information, easy case tracking and improved access for both lawyers and litigants. The Chief Justice highlighted that the application would particularly benefit people in remote areas, enabling them to stay updated on court proceedings without physical visits. Stressing the importance of regular usage,

he encouraged members of the legal fraternity to fully adopt the app, adding that technology has meaning only when actively and consistently used.

He also noted that the app is backward-compatible and can function on most devices.

Reflecting on his visit to the Hornbill Festival at Kisama, the Chief Justice spoke about the strong sense of brotherhood he witnessed and urged the Bar to carry the same spirit into their professional interactions. He further encouraged young lawyers to remain diligent in their preparation, recounting an instance where a young advocate promptly presented a required judgment during court proceedings.

Security forces killed eighteen Naxalites in a major Bastar encounter, though three personnel lost their lives during the operation

Security forces eliminate 18 naxalites in major operation

BIJAPUR

In one of the most significant setbacks to Maoist insurgency in the Bastar region this year, security forces eliminated 18 Naxalites in an intense gun battle in the dense Keshkutul forests of Bijapur district.

The operation, which began, saw the toll rise from 12 to 18 after additional bodies were recovered during Thursday morning's combing operations.

The encounter broke out when a joint force comprising the District Reserve Guard (DRG), Special Task Force (STF), CoBRA commandos of the CRPF, and local police launched an anti-Naxal offensive based on specific intelligence inputs in the Gangaloor police station limits.

As the team advanced, Maoists belonging to the People's Liberation Guerrilla Army (PLGA) Company No. 2, Bhairamgarh Area Committee, and Gangaloor Area Committee opened heavy fire, prompting a fierce exchange that lasted several hours.

Despite facing automatic weapons, IED threats, and being heavily outnumbered, the forces retaliated with precision, neutralising 18 Maoists on the spot. A substantial cache of arms and explosives was recovered from the scene.

Bijapur Superintendent of Police Jitendra Singh Meena said the identification process of the deceased Naxalites is underway, with names and ranks to be released once confirmed. Meanwhile, extensive search operations are continuing in the surrounding forest areas to track down any fleeing insurgents.

The encounter, however, came at a heavy cost. Three security personnel, Head Constable Monu Mohan Baddi, Constable Dukaru Gonde (posthumously promoted to Head Constable), and DRG Jawan Ramesh Sodi lost their lives while displaying exemplary courage in the line of duty. Their mortal remains were brought to Bijapur headquarters on Thursday, where solemn tributes were paid at the Police Line Shaheed Vatika along the Bijapur–Gangaloor road.

Pahalgam hotel faces action for concealing stay of foreigners

SRINAGAR

An FIR has been registered against a hotel in J&K's Pahalgam hill station for concealing the stay of two foreign nationals at the hotel, police said on Thursday. Police in Anantnag district said that the FIR has been registered against a hotel for violation of the Immigration and Foreigners Act, 2025.

A team from Police Station Pahalgam, during routine inspections of hotels and guest establishments in the Rafting Point area, found that Hotel Golden Heritage, Rafting Point, Yenner, had accommodated two Thai nationals without submitting the mandatory Form C, a police official said. The form, which must be filed online by all establishments hosting foreign guests, is a key component of the reporting and verification mechanism mandated under the Act, the official added. The hotel, police said, had concealed the stay of the visitors, a lapse seen as a serious security concern and a clear breach of statutory obligations meant to ensure proper monitoring of foreign travellers. Following the detection, FIR No. 79/2025 under Sections 8 and 23(b) of the Immigration and Foreigners Act, 2025, was registered at Police Station Pahalgam. Further investigation is underway, the police official added.

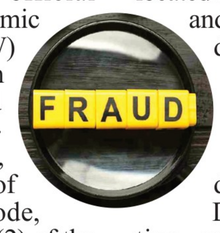
J&K crime branch files charge sheet in land fraud case

Jammu and Kashmir Crime Branch has filed a charge sheet in a major land fraud case before the Srinagar anti-corruption court.

JAMMU

The Jammu and Kashmir Crime Branch on Thursday announced that it has filed a charge sheet in a high-profile land fraud case before the Special Judge Anti-Corruption Court in Srinagar. aThe case, registered under FIR No. 79/2022, involves serious allegations of forgery, conspiracy and fraudulent mutation of land in the city.

According to an official statement, the Economic Offences Wing (EOW) of Crime Branch Kashmir submitted the charge sheet under Sections 420, 467, 468, 471 and 120-B of the Ranbir Penal Code, along with Section 5(2) of the Prevention of Corruption Act. The charge sheet names three accused individuals: businessman Habibullah Bhat, son of Mohammad Sultan Bhat and resident of Omarhair Buchpora; retired Naib Tehsildar Mohammad Rajab Reshi, son of Haji Ghulam Ahmad Reshi from Brein Nishat; and former Patwari Syed Khurshid Ahmad, son of Late Syed Mohammad Amin, resident of Watalbagh Lar in Ganderbal.



The case originated from a written complaint alleging that a fraudulent mutation was carried out for a 10-marla plot located under Khasra Nos. 467 and 468 in Zoonimar Eidgah, Srinagar. The mutation was allegedly executed in favour of one of the accused on the basis of a sale deed that never existed.

During the investigation, authorities discovered that no sale deed bearing Registration No. 1693 dated 08.09.2003 had ever been issued by the concerned Sub-Registrar. Further probe revealed that the accused businessman, in criminal conspiracy with the then Patwari and Naib Tehsildar, manipulated revenue records and fraudulently inserted mutation entries using the fabricated document.

Delhi CM launches pole-mounted mist spray system

NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta on Thursday launched a pole-mounted mist spray system for dust and pollution control in the ITO area in the central parts of the Capital, an official said. She said that at ITO, nearly 35 poles have been equipped with mist sprayers. The government is preparing to install mist sprayers on 305 poles at nine hotspots where pollution is a very serious problem, said CM Gupta, referring to the constitution of a panel to tackle the city's pollution.

Each pole has five nozzles, and each nozzle has six tiny holes, enabling 30 spray points per pole. Every pole uses approximately 84 litres of treated water per hour, supported by four 5,000-litre storage tanks. A similar setup has been installed along a 900-metre stretch on Shanti Path and a 500-metre stretch on Lodhi Road. She said, This is a battle against pollution, and we need public support to boost the government's efforts. The government is ready to provide solutions to any pollution-causing factor. After using water sprinklers, we are considering mist technology, which is proving to be a very effective solution. We initially implemented it in some areas under NDMC, and the results were positive. Now, the Delhi government is planning to expand it to all major roads in the city, she said.

CM Gupta held a review meeting and said that any negligence in pollution control in the national capital will not be tolerated. She stated that her government is treating pollution as an emergency mission and is making determined efforts to bring it under control.

The Chief Minister made it clear that government institutions showing laxity in pollution control will not be spared.

MP to merge small primary schools: Min Uday Singh

BHOPAL

Government-run primary schools in Madhya Pradesh with fewer than 10 students will be merged with a nearby larger school located within a 1 km radius, School Education Minister Uday Pratap Singh informed the Assembly on Thursday. He said the step aims to improve resource utilisation and enhance student interaction. Responding to a question raised by MLA Amar Singh Yadav during the Winter Session, Minister Singh added that teachers from such under-enrolled schools would also be shifted to bigger schools to ensure optimum use of staff and infrastructure.

During Question Hour, Congress MLA Babu Jandel raised the issue of compensation for farmers for damaged crops in Sheopur district. He claimed that several farmers have not yet received the funds released by the state government.

Farmers in Sheopur district were supposed to get compensation of Rs 16,000 per hectare, but many farmers are yet to receive funds in their bank accounts, Sheopur Congress MLA Jandel said.

The State's Revenue Minister Karan Singh Verma, while responding to Jandel's claim, said that he would inquire into the matter personally to ensure that all farmers get compensation. He also accepted that some farmers had yet to receive funds in their bank accounts.

Notably, on November 27, Chief Minister Mohan Yadav had transferred Rs 238.78 crore to the bank accounts of over three lakh farmers as part of compensation for paddy crops damaged due to heavy rain a few weeks ago.

The fund was released to the farmers of seven districts, such as Sheopur, Morena, Harda, Vidisha, Narmadapuram, Dhar and Khandwa.

Meanwhile, the House is scheduled to debate the second supplementary budget presented on Tuesday by Deputy Chief Minister and Finance Minister Jagdish Devda. The Rs 13,476.94 crore outlay includes Rs 8,448.57 crore under the revenue head and Rs 5,028.37 crore under the capital head.

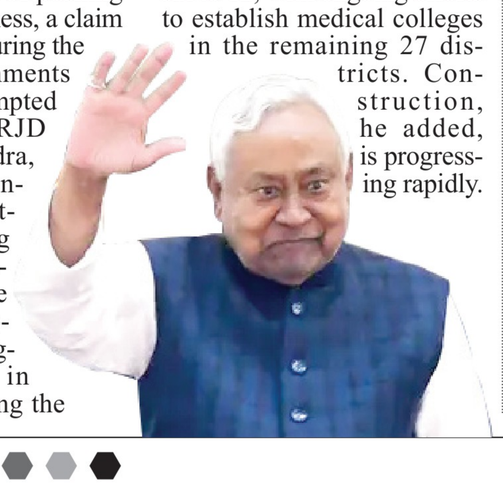
NDA ACHIEVEMENTS IN BIHAR

NITISH KUMAR HIGHLIGHTS NDA GOVT'S ACHIEVEMENTS

PATNA

On the fourth day of the winter session of the Bihar Assembly, Chief Minister Nitish Kumar presented a comprehensive overview of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government's performance, while also delivering sharp remarks aimed at the opposition. The House simultaneously held a discussion on the Governor's address.

Concluding his speech, CM Nitish turned towards the RJD benches and said, We kept you on the sidelines twice, and we carried out so much work. At that time, you accepted everything I said. He further asserted, When you made mistakes, we left you, but now we will never leave. This is our own place, and we will stay here. But remember the work which has been done by our government. Leader of the Opposition Tejashwi Yadav was notably absent during the Chief Minister's address. Reinforcing his criticism, Nitish Kumar questioned the opposition's performance, saying, Why aren't you working? Others are. If work is done, it helps everyone. The NDA has repeatedly accused previous RJD governments of pushing the state into darkness, a claim Nitish reiterated during the session. The comments prompted an attempted interruption by RJD MLA Bhai Virendra, but CM Nitish continued uninterrupted, emphasising that his government had twice sidelined the opposition and made significant strides in development during the NDA's governance. Highlighting achievements in the health sector, the Chief Minister said that primary health centres—once plagued by extremely low patient turnout—now receive an average of 11,600 patients each month. He announced that the number of medical colleges in the state has doubled, rising from six to 12, with ongoing efforts to establish medical colleges in the remaining 27 districts. Construction, he added, is progressing rapidly.



Madinah-Hyd flight diverted to Ahmedabad after bomb threat

HYDERABAD

A bomb threat forced authorities to divert the IndiGo flight coming to Hyderabad from Saudi Arabia's Madinah to Ahmedabad on Thursday, officials said. The flight 6E58 with 180 passengers and six crew members landed safely at the Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel International Airport in Ahmedabad around 12.30 p.m. The flight was mid-air when IndiGo reportedly received a bomb threat via email. As Ahmedabad was the nearest airport, the authorities diverted the flight there as a precautionary measure. After the landing, Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) personnel, along with local police and bomb disposal squad, conducted a thorough check of the aircraft but did not find anything suspicious.

BRS accuses Cong govt of ₹5 lakh cr land 'scam'

HYDERABAD

Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) working president K. T. Rama Rao on Thursday alleged that the Congress government in Telangana is committing a huge land scam of Rs 5 lakh crore in the name of Hyderabad Industrial Land Transformation Policy.

He claimed that the lands that were once given by the government to industries to create jobs for people are now being given to private individuals. KTR, as the BRS leader is popularly known, led a field-level visit to Jeedimetla industrial area as part of the party's fact-finding mission on Hyderabad Industrial Land Transformation Policy (HILTP). The former minister interacted with workers and urged them to resist the loot by the government. He alleged that the government is giving industrial lands to build apartments, villas and commercial complexes as it does not want industries. KTR, along with other BRS leaders, participated in a rally to protest against HILTP. India's biggest sam! Rs 5 Lakh crores, reads the placard carried by the BRS leader.

He stated that these are not private lands, but lands given by the government to private individuals with the condition that industries should be set up to employ people.

He demanded that people's assets should remain with people. Claiming that while the market price for these lands is Rs 1 lakh per square yard, the government is handing them to private individuals for just Rs 4,000.

He urged the real estate developers not to get cheated with the sale offer by the government and warned that once BRS returns to power, it would take back these lands.

Calling Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy, a corruption Anaconda, KTR alleged that the Congress leader was conspiring to sell the lands to send the share to Delhi leaders.

QUICK READ

Civil groups protest evictions targeting poor communities

Islamabad

Civil society groups, street vendors, and residents of katchi abadis gathered at the National Press Club to protest eviction drives carried out by the Capital Development Authority. They asked the judiciary to protect their right to housing and livelihood. Leaders from the Awami Workers Party said the demolitions mainly target the poor, while big developers face no action. They cited a 2015 court order stopping such demolitions and demanded proper housing plans for low-income families.

India sends aid support to cyclone-hit Sri Lanka

Colombo

India has airlifted a movable modular bridge and hundreds of water-purification units to cyclone-hit Sri Lanka to help reconnect cut-off areas and restore basic services. The Indian mission said the support aims to assist communities affected by Cyclone Ditwah, which has caused massive floods, landslides, and heavy damage to infrastructure. Sri Lanka continues to struggle with relief efforts, as at least 479 people have died and 350 remain missing after severe weather battered several districts since November 16.

Democrats release disturbing images from Epstein home

Washington

US Democrats on the House Oversight Committee have released new photos and videos from Jeffrey Epstein's private island home, calling the material "disturbing." The images show bedrooms with wall masks, a phone listing names on speed-dial, and a blackboard with words like "power" and "deception." Democratic leader Robert Garcia said the release aims to ensure transparency. He added that Epstein's financial records from major banks have been received and more files will be made public soon.

Lula urges diplomatic resolution for Venezuela in call with Trump

Lula urged Trump to avoid military action in Venezuela, warning it could destabilise South America and worsen the crisis.

SAO PAULO

President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva has stressed the need for a peaceful and diplomatic solution to the crisis in Venezuela during a recent phone call with US President Donald Trump. According to reports first published by O Estado de S. Paulo and later confirmed by Brasil 247, Lula expressed strong concern over the possibility of US military intervention in the neighbouring country.

Lula reportedly warned Trump that any military step could lead to serious "collateral effects" across South America. He said such an action could worsen the humanitarian situation in Venezuela, trigger a larger flow of migrants, and even increase the risk of civil conflict. He also stressed that these problems would not remain within Venezuela's borders and could quickly spread to Brazil, Colombia, and other nearby countries, raising regional tensions.

The report says Lula repeated his belief that only dialogue and negotiation can bring lasting peace to Venezuela. Trump, however, did not clearly state his plans, keeping open the option of military action or continued talks with President Nicolas Maduro's government.

Officials close to Lula believe that any US intervention would face strong resistance from major global powers. They noted that the European Union, Russia, and China are unlikely to support such a move. Within the Brazilian government, many think Washington's interest in Venezuela is closely tied to the country's large oil reserves.

During the call, Lula also briefed Trump for the first time on Brazil's recent efforts against organised crime. He highlighted Federal Police actions aimed at weakening the financial networks of groups like the Carbono Oculto faction. Trump reportedly expressed interest in deeper cooperation.

The 40-minute conversation took place while Lula was visiting the Abreu e Lima refinery in Pernambuco. He welcomed the US move to remove a 40% surcharge on some Brazilian exports but urged faster progress on tariff-reduction talks. Although Trump was polite, he offered no firm commitments.

Taliban accuses Pak of imposing unwanted projs on Afghan

KABUL

Afghanistan's Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi has accused Pakistan of trying to impose "mysterious projects" on the country and pressuring the Taliban administration through economic and political tactics. Speaking at a gathering in Kabul, he said Pakistan hoped Afghans would turn against the Taliban government after Islamabad shut key trade routes.

However, he said that Pakistan's border closures did not create shortages, as other regional partners continued supplying essential goods. He added that Pakistan has long-standing disputes with almost all its neighbours and is now pushing Afghanistan with "unrealistic and unacceptable" security demands.

Muttaqi said the Taliban has already taken steps to address Pakistan's concerns over the past four years by relocating Waziristani families from border areas and deploying additional forces. He argued that Pakistan expects the Taliban to "deliver everything," while it struggles with its own internal security issues.

He also criticised Pakistan's political system, saying divided decision-making between civilian leaders and the military makes talks inconsistent. Defending Afghanistan's growing ties with India, he said relations with New Delhi were legitimate for a sovereign nation.

Amid rising border tensions, the Taliban recently showcased hundreds of newly trained commandos, saying they are ready to defend Afghanistan's territory.

India continues humanitarian support through medical supplies and relief assistance

India sends vital vaccines and aid to Afghanistan

KABUL

India has strengthened its ongoing humanitarian efforts in Afghanistan by delivering 63,734 doses of Influenza and Meningitis vaccines to Kabul on Thursday. The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) announced the delivery on X, reaffirming India's commitment to supporting Afghanistan's public health needs.

This latest shipment comes soon after India delivered 73 tonnes of life-saving medicines, vaccines and essential supplements on November 28. The MEA said these supplies were meant to help meet urgent healthcare demands in Afghanistan. External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal posted that India's support for the Afghan people "continues unwaveringly."

India has also been engaging diplomatically to improve cooperation between the two countries. On November 20, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar met Afghanistan's Industry and Commerce Minister Alhaj Nooruddin Azizi in New Delhi. Both leaders discussed ways to boost trade, connectivity and people-to-people ties. Jaishankar reaffirmed that India remains committed to the development and welfare of Afghans.

Earlier in the month, on November 3, India sent food supplies to families affected by a powerful 6.3-magnitude earthquake that struck Balkh, Samangan and Baghlan provinces. More than 20 people were killed and hundreds injured in the disaster. The MEA said India was providing this help to support those recovering from the tragedy.

Following the quake, Jaishankar spoke with Afghanistan's acting Foreign Minister Mawlawi Amir Khan Muttaqi to offer condolences. He said Indian relief materials were already being handed over and that more medical supplies would reach soon. Jaishankar later wrote that both sides also discussed progress in their bilateral ties and welcomed growing people-to-people engagement between India and Afghanistan.

Former President Yoon faces new perjury charges

SEOUL

South Korea's special counsel team announced on Thursday that former President Yoon Suk Yeol has been additionally indicted on charges of perjury. The team said Yoon gave false testimony during the insurrection trial of former Prime Minister Han Duck-soo.

Yoon is already standing trial for insurrection and other charges linked to his failed attempt to impose martial law last December. Investigators say he falsely suggested that the Cabinet meeting he held before declaring martial law had been planned before Han advised it. Assistant special counsel Park Ji-young said the new perjury charge was filed based on Yoon's statements during Han's trial.

During last month's hearing, Yoon was asked whether Han had proposed holding a Cabinet meeting to make the martial law declaration appear legitimate. Yoon objected to the question and said, "Cabinet members are not dolls who came to create an outward appearance." However, the special counsel team believes Yoon originally had no intention of calling a Cabinet meeting and only agreed after Han insisted it would add credibility.

In a separate case, prosecutors have demanded a 15-year prison sentence for former first lady Kim Keon Hee. She was indicted in August on charges including corruption, bribery and violations of the Capital Market Act and Political Funds Act. Kim is accused of working with the former head of Deutsch Motors and another associate to manipulate the company's stock between 2010 and 2012, earning 810 million won in illegal profits. For this charge alone, the team requested 11 years in prison, a fine of 2 billion won and forfeiture of 811 million won.

Kim is also accused of accepting free opinion polls worth 270 million won with her husband ahead of the 2022 presidential election in exchange for helping secure a political nomination.

Iran seeks stronger trade ties with neighbours

TEHRAN

Iranian Foreign Minister Seyyed Abbas Araghchi has said that his ministry is ready to expand Iran's economic and trade relations, especially with neighbouring countries. Local media reported on Thursday that Araghchi made these remarks during a meeting with a group of lawmakers, where he discussed regional and global developments and highlighted ongoing diplomatic efforts to protect Iran's national interests.

Araghchi underlined the need for strong cooperation between Iran's Foreign Ministry and the Parliament to help the country meet its diplomatic goals. He said this coordination is important for strengthening Iran's position in the region.

Earlier this week, Araghchi also spoke about the Foreign Ministry's work to defend the rights and interests of Iran, he said maintaining national unity is essential for overcoming threats from what he called Iran's enemies.

He noted that Iran's response to attacks by Israel and the United States marked an important moment in the country's recent history. He praised the determination of the Iranian people in resisting foreign pressure and refusing what he called "illegitimate and excessive" demands.

Iran's Foreign Minister says the country is ready to deepen economic and trade ties with neighbouring nations while stressing unity, national strength, and coordinated foreign policy efforts

Araghchi said Iran's recent achievements were made possible by the leadership of the Leader of the Revolution, the commitment of the Armed Forces, and the unity of the people. He described these as key factors in achieving what he called a historic victory for the nation.

The minister also stressed the importance of strengthening Iran's overall national power. He highlighted the need to improve defence capabilities, support social unity, and tackle economic challenges. Araghchi said the government is working to ease the country's economic problems and improve stability for its citizens.

Strong earthquake in Xinjiang highlights China's seismic vulnerability

XINJIANG

A strong earthquake measuring 6.2 on the Richter scale shook China's Xinjiang region on Thursday, the National Center for Seismology (NCS) reported. The quake struck at a shallow depth of 10 km, increasing the likelihood of aftershocks and stronger surface shaking. The NCS posted details on X, noting the tremor occurred at 13:14:07 IST at latitude 41.10 N and longitude 78.61 E.

Just two days earlier, on December 2, the region experienced another earthquake of magnitude 3.9, also at a depth of 10 km. Shallow quakes like these typically cause more damage because seismic waves reach the surface quickly and with greater intensity.

China's geography makes it one of the world's most earthquake-prone countries, positioned between the circum-Pacific and circum-Indian seismic belts. The movement of the Pacific, Indian and Philippine plates has created extensive fracture zones across the region.

Since the early 20th century, China has recorded more than 800 earthquakes of magnitude 6 or higher. Nearly all provinces and autonomous regions have been struck at some point, except Guizhou, Zhejiang and Hong Kong. According to the Science Museums of China, more than 5,50,000 people have died in earthquakes in China since 1900, representing over half of global earthquake casualties during that period.

Since 1949, the country has experienced more than 100 destructive quakes, with East China alone witnessing 14 major events. These disasters have killed more than 2,70,000 people and destroyed over 7 million rooms across 300,000 square kilometres.

Experts warn that China's vulnerability to earthquakes and other natural disasters remains a major challenge, even during stable times.

SU DO KU

Brain-Bender: Can You Solve It?

	7		9		1	6		5
1		6		5	7		8	
3		9		8		2		1
2	1		7		8		5	
	8		2		3	7		9
9		7		4			1	2
8		2	1		9		6	
5		3		6	4		2	
7	6		5		2			8

3	6	9	1	8	5	7	4	2
2	5	4	7	9	6	8	1	3
8	7	1	3	4	2	9	5	6
5	4	2	6	7	1	3	9	8
6	3	8	9	5	4	2	7	1
1	9	7	8	2	3	4	6	5
4	2	3	5	1	9	6	8	7
9	8	5	2	6	7	1	3	4
7	1	6	4	3	8	5	2	9

Solutions to Yesterday's puzzle

Fill a 9×9 grid with numbers so that each row, column and 3×3 section contain all of the digits between 1 and 9.

EASING ALCOHOL BAN

Thailand eases longstanding afternoon alcohol ban

BANGKOK

Thailand has paused its decades-old afternoon alcohol ban, raising questions about why the rule existed in the first place. The government has eased the restriction for 180 days to help boost tourism during the peak travel season.

The ban began in 1972, when Thailand blocked alcohol sales between 2 pm and 5 pm. The rule was not originally meant for tourists but for government employees. Officials at the time feared that workers might leave their offices for mid-day drinks, lowering productivity. To prevent this, the government restricted legal alcohol sales during those hours, and the policy remained in place for more than 50 years.

But what made sense in the 1970s became confusing for modern travellers. Thailand, known for its beaches, lively nightlife and party spots, also had one of the strictest daytime alcohol rules in Asia. Many tourists were surprised when bars and shops suddenly stopped selling alcohol in the afternoon. Some even faced fines of up to 10,000 baht for breaking the rule.

Now, with tourism still recovering and the festive season approaching, the government has temporarily relaxed the rule. For the next six months, alcohol can be sold from 11 am to midnight while a committee reviews the effects of the change.

Prime Minister Anutin Charnvirakul, who took office in September, has made tourism revival a major goal. Officials say the workplace reasons behind the old rule no longer apply in today's environment. Deputy Prime Minister Sophon Saram recently remarked, "In the past, the fear was that state employees would sneak out to drink. Times have changed."

QUICK READ

Mahindra sells 3.58% stake in CIE Automotive

New Delhi

Mahindra & Mahindra announced that its Mauritius-based arm, Mahindra Overseas Investment Company Ltd., has sold a 3.58% stake in CIE Automotive S.A. for about 119 million euros. The deal was confirmed through a regulatory filing on Thursday. CIE Automotive, a global auto components company, is an associate of Mahindra's subsidiary. The sale represents only part of the subsidiary's total holding. Mahindra has not disclosed the reason behind the move, but officials said the transaction was completed smoothly. The company noted that the sale will support its financial plans and ongoing business strategies without affecting existing partnerships.

Alkem labs served costly GST notice

New Delhi

Alkem Laboratories said on Thursday that it has received a GST demand notice of ₹27.14 lakh from the Uttarakhand authorities. The order, issued by the Dehradun Central GST Division, covers the period from 2018–19 to 2022–23. Along with the tax demand, a penalty of ₹27.79 lakh has also been imposed. The authorities have further asked the company to pay interest under the CGST, SGST and IGST Acts. Alkem stated in its filing that it is reviewing the notice and will take appropriate steps. The company assured that the matter will not affect its regular business operations.

C&I green energy set for big surge

New Delhi

India's commercial and industrial (C&I) renewable energy capacity is expected to grow sharply to 60–80 GW by 2030, a senior government official said on Thursday. Speaking at the CII IndiaEdge event, New and Renewable Energy Secretary Santosh Kumar Sarangi noted that C&I installations are rising fast and may cross 6 GW in 2025 alone. The C&I segment includes factories, offices, malls, schools and hospitals that either install their own green power units or source power from developers. Sarangi said the growing shift to clean energy in this sector shows strong demand and a steady move toward sustainable power use.

Luxury Time Limited IPO set for market debut

New Delhi

Luxury Time Limited, a distributor of Swiss luxury watch brands like TAG Heuer, Zenith and Bomberg, will open its ₹18.74-crore IPO on December 4. Founded in 2008, the company also supplies watch-service tools from Swiss makers Bergeon and Horotec. The issue includes a fresh sale of 18.28 lakh shares worth ₹15 crore and an offer for sale of 4.56 lakh shares worth ₹3.74 crore. The price band is fixed at ₹78–₹82 per share. Luxury Time operates in distribution, retail and after-sales service, and aims to strengthen its operations with the market listing.

New cess on 'pan masala' to fund health and security programs

The Minister said GST taxes consumption, so a new 40% cess is planned as compensation ends, leaving some pan masala untaxed

NEW DELHI

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Thursday moved the Health Security se National Security Cess Bill, 2025 in the Lok Sabha for consideration and passing. She said the Bill aims to raise stable funds for two key areas—public health and national security.

Explaining the reason behind the proposal, the Minister noted that the GST system taxes consumption, not production. Products like pan masala are taxed at 28 per cent plus compensation cess

under GST, but since the compensation cess is ending, the government plans to shift this portion into a new 40 per cent cess. She added that many varieties of pan masala still fall outside the tax net because GST does not consider production capacity.

Sitharaman explained that excise duty taxes production, which is why cigarettes are under excise. However, pan masala is not classified as an excisable product, so it cannot be taxed the same way. The new Bill introduces a production-based cess to address this gap and discourage the use of harmful goods.

She stressed that the cess will apply only to demerit goods and not essential items. The revenue will support national security needs and help address the heavy health burden caused by such products.

Congress MP Varun Chaudhury suggested sending the Bill to a Select Committee, pointing out that its title appears bilingual. The Bill, introduced on December 1, proposes a cess on products like pan masala, with rates ranging from Rs 1.01 crore to Rs 25.47 crore per machine per month. Penalties include fines and imprisonment for serious fraud.

A structured appeals process and strict inspection powers are included. The Bill aims to provide predictable resources for public health and security.

Government reaffirms dignity for honest taxpayers

NEW DELHI

Chaudhary said the government aims to deter illegal trade, praising DRI's role since 1957 in protecting economic borders amid challenges, shifts, and organized crime networks

The government has reiterated its commitment to creating a business environment where honest taxpayers can work with dignity and without fear. Union Minister of State for Finance, Pankaj Chaudhary, made this statement during the 68th Founding Day celebrations of the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) held in the capital on Thursday.

Chaudhary said the government is determined to make illegal trade through India's land, waterways, or air risky, difficult, and ultimately futile. He praised DRI for its crucial role in safeguarding the nation's economic borders since its formation in 1957. According to him, DRI's dedication has helped the country stay strong in the face of new global challenges, technological changes, and the rise of organised international crime networks.

CBIC Chairman Vivek Chaturvedi also appreciated DRI's professionalism and its importance in supporting fair and legitimate trade across the country. He urged officers to continue using technology, risk-management tools, and international cooperation to further strengthen border security.

Abhai Kumar Srivastav, Director General of DRI, reaffirmed the agency's commitment to the highest ethical standards. He highlighted how DRI teams continue to bust smuggling rackets and stop the flow of illegal funds, which could be used by anti-national groups or criminal organisations.

During the event, DRI released its annual 'Smuggling in India Report 2024–25', which provides insights into smuggling trends, major achievements, upcoming challenges, and suggested policy changes.

The ceremony also saw participation from 30 international delegates from 15 countries attending the 10th Regional Customs Enforcement Meeting, highlighting India's growing collaboration with global enforcement partners in the fight against cross-border crime.

'AI drives growth for India's small businesses'

NEW DELHI

India's small businesses are stepping into 2026 with strong confidence in technology, especially Artificial Intelligence (AI). A new report shows that 83 per cent of India's small business leaders now believe AI is essential for growth. The data, shared by LinkedIn, explains how AI, trust, and strong professional networks are shaping the next phase of entrepreneurship in the country.

The Small Business Work Change India Report highlights a big rise in people choosing to become entrepreneurs. In just one year, the number of LinkedIn members adding "founder" to their profiles has grown by 104 per cent. More than 70 per cent of professionals now say they want to work for themselves, showing a shift toward independent work and business ownership.

AI is becoming deeply connected to daily business activities for small and medium companies. According to the report, 82 per cent of small business leaders feel that AI has made it easier to start and manage a business. Nearly 97 per cent are already using AI tools in different ways. AI learning is also rising. Companies with 11 to 200 employees have increased their AI literacy by 52 per cent, and 81 per cent of small businesses are actively investing in AI skill development.

Experts believe generative AI could add $621 billion in productivity to India, with small businesses contributing almost 30 per cent of that growth. LinkedIn India Country Manager Kumaresh Pattabiraman said the country's small businesses are growing with "extraordinary speed and ambition."

The report also shows that building trust is now more important than ever. More than 60 per cent of small business owners worldwide create their own online content, and over 70 per cent say authenticity matters. In India, 82 per cent of marketers say buyers now check information through trusted people before purchasing, and 77 per cent feel professional networks strongly support a brand's reputation.

Unions with 51% votes gain sole bargaining rights, and a new reskilling fund supports retrenched workers in India

New labour codes promise fairer work system: Brickwork Ratings

NEW DELHI

India's new labour codes are being seen as a major step toward improving worker protection while also reducing the compliance burden for employers. A new report by Brickwork Ratings said these reforms will help build a modern, inclusive, and competitive labour system that supports both worker welfare and business growth.

According to the report, the new laws simplify many administrative procedures through digital filings and single registrations. This helps companies reduce paperwork and easily adjust their workforce when needed. Higher thresholds for retrenchment approvals are expected to make India more investment-friendly.

The codes introduce many worker-centric measures. These include universal minimum wages, equal pay for men and women, and overtime wages at twice the normal rate. Fixed-term employment is now formally recognised, and such employees become eligible for gratuity after one year. The reforms also introduce work-from-home provisions, a 60-day strike notice rule, and a raised retrenchment approval limit—from 100 to 300 workers—under the Industrial Relations Code.

Trade unions receiving 51 per cent of votes will now have exclusive negotiating rights. The government has also created a re-skilling fund to support workers who lose jobs due to retrenchment.

One of the most important changes comes under the Code on Social Security,

2020. It expands EPFO, ESI, and gratuity benefits to gig and platform workers, giving them long-awaited formal recognition. National social security coverage is expected to rise to over 64 per cent of the workforce in 2025, compared to just 19 per cent a decade ago.

The four unified labour codes—covering wages, social security, industrial relations, and occupational safety—replace 29 older labour laws and officially came into effect on November 21.

Domestic investors drive strong market momentum

MUMBAI

Domestic institutional investors (DIIs) have poured a massive $81.3 billion into Indian stock markets so far in 2025, surpassing the total inflows recorded in all of 2024. A new report by Motilal Oswal Financial Services Ltd. (MOFSL) revealed that this strong domestic buying came even as foreign institutional investors (FIIs) pulled out $16.2 billion during the same period.

According to the report, company earnings tracked by MOFSL grew 12 per cent year-on-year in Q2 FY26. However, Nifty earnings rose only 2 per cent, marking the sixth consecutive quarter of single-digit profit growth. Mid-cap and small-cap companies delivered much stronger results, with Nifty

Midcap-150 profits rising 27 per cent and Nifty Smallcap-250 profits up 37 per cent.

Domestic investors continued their steady buying, adding $8.7 billion in November alone — their 28th straight month of positive inflows. Meanwhile, foreign investor activity remained nearly flat for the month. The report added that about 60 per cent of Nifty companies closed November with gains. Technology, PSU banks, and healthcare sectors showed solid month-on-month growth, while PSBs, auto, and metals dominated performance for the year so far.

Despite pressure on India's manufacturing sector due to US tariffs, domestic demand remained strong. A GST-driven boost in consumption during Q2 and higher government spending in Q3 are expected to help offset weak export figures.

The report said India's forex reserves stayed high at $688 billion, with the rupee trading at Rs 89.5 per US dollar. Market activity remained firm, with daily cash volumes rising 6 per cent month-on-month and F&O volumes touching their second-highest level of the year.

India's total market capitalisation stands at $5.3 trillion, slightly lower than its September 2024 peak, as global markets outperformed.

Report says India's growth outlook remains strong through 2027

NEW DELHI

India's economy is expected to see steady and strong growth over the next three years, according to a new report released by S&P Global Ratings. The study says India's GDP will grow 6.7 per cent in 2026, rise to 7 per cent in 2027, and settle at 6.8 per cent in 2028. The report highlights that stable inflation and strong job markets will help support consumer spending, especially in developed countries.

Global economic growth is also expected to remain stable at 3.2 per cent in both 2026 and 2027. The report explains that while growth may slow down in the United States and China, the eurozone is showing signs of recovery. Emerging markets (EMs), including India, are expected to remain resilient and will continue driving global expansion.

A major reason for this improved global outlook is the better-than-expected outcome of US tariff policies. The actual tariff impact turned out to be lower than feared, helping calm earlier worries. At the same time, recent easing of tensions between the US and China has supported market confidence.

S&P Global Ratings says emerging markets will lead world growth in 2026, contributing nearly two-thirds of global GDP expansion. EMs are expected to grow at 4.4 per cent, compared to just 1.5 per cent in advanced economies.

Positive factors such as the global AI investment boom, easy financial conditions, and lower oil prices are also helping strengthen growth. However, the report warns that too much investment in data centres may cause financial stress later.

Strong domestic demand, supported by stable inflation and favourable prices of food and energy, is expected to drive most of the growth in emerging markets next year, the report added.

GLOBAL UNCERTAINTY IMPACT

Rupee slide not sign of economic weakness: Report

NEW DELHI

A new SBI Research report has said that the recent fall of the Indian rupee past the 90-per-dollar mark is not a sign of weakness in the country's economy. The study explained that the rupee's slide is mainly due to global uncertainty, delays in the India-US trade deal, and foreign portfolio investors pulling money out of Indian markets. It added that none of these factors reflect any real drop in India's economic strength.

The report noted three major reasons for the rupee's

current pressure. The first is the lack of clarity on the India-US trade agreement. The second is the recent foreign outflow from Indian shares after two strong years of inflows. The third is the Reserve Bank of India's decision to avoid too much intervention in the currency market, allowing natural movement.

SBI Research also pointed out that the offshore non-deliverable forward (NDF) market has become more active in recent weeks, while the US dollar index is gaining strength. Both developments are adding short-term pressure on the rupee.

Concerns that India's trade deficit is pushing the currency down are overstated, the report said. Between April and October, India's goods and services deficit stood at $78 billion, only slightly higher than $70 billion during the same period last year.

Since April 2, when the US announced steep tariff hikes on many countries, the Indian rupee has fallen by about 5.5 per cent — more than most large global currencies. India faces a 50 per cent US tariff, which is higher than those imposed on China, Vietnam, Indonesia, and Japan.

The report added that nearly $45 billion worth of Indian exports, mainly labour-heavy items, may be affected by the higher tariffs.

New Zealand build massive lead with strong batting

With New Zealand over 400 ahead, Rachin and Latham added 279 runs before both fell, leaving hosts scoring heavily

CHRISTCHURCH

New Zealand took full control of the first Test against the West Indies after powerful centuries from Rachin Ravindra and Tom Latham on Day 3 at Hagley Oval. The hosts ended the day at 417/4, carrying a huge 481-run lead and putting the visitors under enormous pressure. New Zealand started the morning at 32/0, already ahead by 96 runs. Latham and Devon Conway stretched their stand to 84 before Conway was caught at deep point off Ojay Shields. Shields also removed Kane Williamson for 9, leaving New Zealand at 100/2. From there, the West Indies struggled to find any success as Rachin and Latham took charge.

Rachin reached a busy half-century from 52 balls, while Latham brought up his 14th Test century just before Tea. By then, the pair had added over 130 runs at a fast pace. The lead crossed 300 soon after the break, with Rachin hitting three early boundaries to reach his hundred from 107 balls. As the second new ball arrived, New Zealand were already more than 400 ahead. Rachin passed Latham's score, and their stand grew to 279 runs before Kemar Roach dismissed Latham with an inswinger. Rachin later fell to a sharp yorker from Shields, but the hosts still scored heavily.

New Zealand added 184 runs in the final session alone, leaving the West Indies with a mountain to climb. The visitors will need a remarkable effort to stay alive in the match after falling behind by such a large margin.

SCORE BOARD

NEW ZEALAND
231 & 417/4 (Rachin Ravindra 176, Tom Latham 145; Kemar Roach 2-61) lead
WEST INDIES
167 by 481 runs.

Late bloomer Shintomon breaks KIUG hurdles record

JAIPUR

The 23-year-old broke the KIUG Meet Record at Jaipur's Sawai Mansingh Stadium with 14.32 seconds, winning gold as competitors finished mere thousandths of a second behind.

CB Shintomon's inspiring journey reached a high point as he broke the men's 110m hurdles record at the Khelo India University Games 2025. What makes his achievement remarkable is that he discovered athletics only four years ago. Until 2021, he had never stepped on a synthetic track. His days were filled with studies, school football games, and occasional labour in cardamom plantations near his home in Erattayar, Kerala.

His life changed when Kerala Sports Council Academy coach Baiju Joseph noticed him during a football match. Impressed by his natural strength, Baiju encouraged him to try athletics. After testing events like the 400m and high jump, Shintomon finally found his true fit in the 110m hurdles. His progress since then has been fast and impressive.

The 23-year-old stunned the crowd at Jaipur's Sawai Mansingh Stadium by clocking 14.32 seconds, breaking the KIUG Meet Record and winning gold for Mahatma Gandhi University. The race was intense, with Shivaji University's Vikas Ananda Khodke and University of Calicut's Rahil Sakeer VP finishing only thousandths of a second behind him. For Shintomon, the victory means more than a medal. Growing up in a family with no sports background, he received little exposure or support. His father, a painter earning daily wages, still knows only a little about his sporting success. Shintomon says the belief shown by his coach and college kept him going. Though proud of his record-breaking run, he remains focused on improving. He aims to beat Tejas Shirse's national record of 13.41 seconds and hopes to represent India internationally. Now training under Juilius J Manayani at St. Dominic's College, he is preparing for a busy 2026 season, motivated to push his limits even further.

Inspiring journeys of two rising Kho Kho stars

BENGALURU

Kho Kho champion Gowtham MK stood proudly as he received the Karnataka Kreeda Ratna Award, but his thoughts went back to the days when his father could give him only Rs 10 as weekly pocket money. The 27-year-old athlete, son of an auto-rickshaw driver, has risen through years of struggle and hard work to reach this special moment.

Gowtham's journey began in the 4th standard when his school physical training teacher, Mahadesh, noticed his talent. His father once dreamed of sending him to a private school, but financial challenges forced a change. Encouraged by his teacher, Gowtham joined sports at his government school and soon found his passion for Kho Kho. After the 8th standard, the Young Pioneers Sports Club supported both his training and education, helping him grow into a strong competitor. Over the years, Gowtham has played more than 20 national-level tournaments and represented India in the 4th Asian Kho Kho Championship and the first Kho Kho World Cup, winning gold in both events. His performance in the 2018 India-Nepal Test series also helped him secure a government job in the Postal Department. Today, he proudly tells his father that he no longer needs to drive the auto-rickshaw, as Gowtham can support the family. Another remarkable story comes from Kuruburu village in Mysuru district, where 22-year-old Chaithra B. also received the Kreeda Ratna Award. Coming from a humble farming family, she faced hardship when her father survived a venomous snakebite after multiple surgeries. Though she once considered quitting Kho Kho, she stayed determined to uplift her family. Chaithra has played in over two dozen championships and shined in the first Kho Kho World Cup, winning the best player award. Both athletes symbolise how passion and perseverance can transform lives, inspiring many young players across Karnataka.

Hardik's return triggers bigger venue, stronger security

HYDERABAD

Hardik Pandya's return to cricket has created such huge excitement among fans that the Baroda–Gujarat Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy match had to be moved to a larger stadium. The game, first planned at the smaller Gymkhana Ground, was shifted to the Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium, which is better prepared for big crowds and stronger security needs.

Officials said the change became necessary after huge groups of fans gathered near team hotels, practice areas, and ticket counters. In Baroda's last match against Punjab, play was stopped many times because fans ran onto the field to meet Hardik. Organisers said all the buzz was mainly for the star all-rounder, whose popularity has grown even more after his long break from the sport. One senior official said that interest in Hardik crossed all expectations, with crowd numbers and enquiries rising far beyond normal domestic cricket levels. Moving the match, they said, was the only way to maintain safety and smooth operations. Hardik returned to action on Tuesday after months of recovery and impressed immediately by scoring an unbeaten 77 off 42 balls, helping Baroda chase 223 against Punjab. He had been away from the game since suffering an injury during the Asia Cup Super Fours match against Sri Lanka, which ruled him out of several international series.

Root hits century, guides England past 300 runs

BRISBANE

England opener Joe Root scored his maiden Test century on Australian soil to guide the visitors past the 300-run mark on Day 1 of the second Ashes Test at the Gabba, Brisbane. England finished at 325/9 in 74 overs, with Root unbeaten on 135 off 202 balls, and Jofra Archer on 32 off 26 balls. England recovered from early setbacks after Ben Duckett and Ollie Pope were dismissed cheaply.

Zak Crawley (76*) and Root steadied the innings with an unbeaten 93-run partnership before stumps. England crossed 200 when captain Ben Stokes played a crisp off-drive to Mitchell Starc. Stokes departed for 19 off 49 balls, caught off a direct hit by Josh Inglis, followed by Jamie Smith falling for a duck to Starc. Root survived a DRS LBW review off Scott Boland in the 52nd over and moved into the nervous 90s with boundaries off Brendan Doggett. Mitchell Starc removed Will Jacks for 19, but Root reached his 40th Test century in 181 deliveries in the 66th over off Boland. Root became the second English player, after Maurice Leyland, to score a century on Day 1 at the Gabba. Starc completed a five-wicket haul after dismissing Gus Atkinson. Root and Archer attacked the Australian attack late, putting on an unbeaten 61-run stand for the final wicket—the highest 10th-wicket partnership in a day-night Test, surpassing 59 runs by Tom Blundell and Blair Tickner in 2023.

BRIEF SCORES
England 325/9 (Joe Root 135*, Zak Crawley 76*; Mitchell Starc 6/71) vs **Australia.**

Dybantsa, Keita lead BYU big win over California

SALT LAKE CITY

AJ Dybantsa and Keba Keita each scored 22 points as No. 9 BYU cruised to a 91-60 victory over California Baptist. Keita also grabbed 14 rebounds, while Robert Wright III contributed 15 points and 11 assists, helping the Cougars (7-1) claim their fourth straight neutral-site win, though the game was played close to their campus.

BYU shot 55% from the field and forced 14 turnovers, converting them into 15 points. The Cougars dominated inside, outscoring Cal Baptist 48-28 in the paint. Martel Williams led the Lancers with 12 points, five rebounds, and five assists, but slowing down Dybantsa and Keita proved impossible. The duo combined for 28 points by halftime, sparking runs that put BYU firmly in control.

A key 10-0 spurt, ignited by back-to-back baskets from Keita and Dybantsa, gave the Cougars a 14-5 lead. Cal Baptist briefly narrowed the gap, but BYU's offense heated up again. Dybantsa and Keita scored five baskets during a 19-5 run that extended the lead to 40-21 with just over two minutes left in the first half. The Cougars held the Lancers to just two baskets over a nine-minute stretch while forcing six turnovers.

BYU continued its offensive surge in the second half, making 10 consecutive shots, including back-to-back baskets from Dybantsa, expanding the lead to 70-39 with nearly 12 minutes remaining.

BYU will face Clemson next Tuesday in the Jimmy V Classic in New York City. California Baptist visits Utah on Saturday, seeking to rebound from the loss.

Starc sets historic record, surpasses Wasim Akram

BRISBANE

Australian fast bowler Mitchell Starc created history on Thursday by becoming the most successful left-arm fast bowler in Test cricket. The 35-year-old achieved the milestone on Day 1 of the second Ashes Test in Brisbane when he dismissed England's Harry Brook for 31, caught by Steve Smith. This wicket took Starc to 415 Test scalps, pushing him past Pakistan legend Wasim Akram's long-standing record of 414 wickets.

Starc reached this feat at the same ground where he made his Test debut in 2011. He is also one of only three bowlers, along with Nathan Lyon and Ravichandran Ashwin, to take over 350 Test wickets since 2015. Akram warmly congratulated Starc, calling him "Super Starc" and praising his hard work in a post on X. Starc crossed the record in his 102nd Test, two fewer than Akram's 104. Just last week in Perth, he delivered a brilliant 7-58 spell and became the 21st bowler — and 13th Australian — to take 100 Ashes wickets. In the current Ashes squads, only Lyon and Starc hold over 100 wickets in the rivalry. Now standing 16th on the all-time wicket-taker list, Starc could soon overtake Harbhajan Singh and Shaun Pollock. He may even challenge Sir Richard Hadlee's 431 wickets during this series.

Olympic flame officially begins journey to Italy

The Olympic flame will tour Italy for 63 days, covering 12,000 km with 10,000 torchbearers before Feb 6

ATHENS

The Olympic flame for the Milan Cortina Winter Games was handed to the Italian organizers on Thursday at the historic Panathenaic Stadium in Athens, the same place where the first modern Olympics were held nearly 130 years ago. The ceremony, though shortened due to forecasts of heavy rain, still drew a few determined spectators who enjoyed songs by Greek and Italian performers as sunlight briefly broke through dark clouds.

The flame will now travel to Italy for a 63-day relay covering 12,000 kilometers across all 110 Italian provinces. More than 10,000 torchbearers have been arranged to guide the flame before it reaches Milan's San Siro Stadium for the opening ceremony on February 6. This marks the first time in 20 years that Italy will host the Olympic flame.

Milan Cortina organizing committee president Giovanni Malago accepted the flame with pride, saying the moment reminded him of the honor of carrying such a meaningful symbol home. Earlier in the day, the flame was brought from the Acropolis, where it had burned overnight beside the ancient Parthenon temple.

Greek water polo player Elena Xenaki carried the flame into the stadium and lit a cauldron along with members of the Greece women's national water polo team. The flame itself was originally lit on November 26 in Ancient Olympia using a concave mirror to focus the sun's rays — a tradition practiced since the 1936 Games. During the ceremony, Greece's Olympic Committee president Isidoros Kouvelos handed the flame to Malago, reminding everyone that while the Olympics cannot change the world entirely, they can show what respect and unity look like.

Italy's Winter Games will include 116 medal events, the debut of ski mountaineering, the return of NHL players in ice hockey and increased participation of women athletes. A separate flame for the Winter Paralympics will be lit in England on February 24.

Bayern edge Union in dramatic five-goal cup clash

BERLIN

Bayern Munich reached the DFB Cup quarterfinals after surviving a tense 3-2 battle against Union Berlin in a match filled with own goals, penalties, and strong late pressure from the home side.

Union started with energy, backed by loud home supporters, but Bayern struck first from a corner when Ilyas Ansah accidentally turned a Joshua Kimmich delivery into his own net. Soon after, another Kimmich set piece helped Bayern double their lead, with Harry Kane heading in from close range.

Union slowly fought back. A VAR review gave them hope when Jonathan Tah was judged to have handled the ball in the box. Leopold Querfeld stepped up and sent Manuel Neuer the wrong way to make it 2-1. But deep into first-half stoppage time, Union's troubles from dead-ball situations returned. Under pressure, Diogo Leite mishit a clearance that looped over his own goalkeeper, giving Bayern a 3-1 lead at the break.

The second half brought more drama. Bayern lost Aleksandar Pavlovic to injury, and Union used the moment to push forward. Kane was penalised for a foul in the box, allowing Querfeld to score his second penalty, cutting the gap to 3-2 and firing up the crowd.

Union attacked nonstop in the final half hour, forcing Bayern deeper and testing Neuer several times.

Arsenal extend lead as Leeds shock Chelsea

LONDON

Arsenal strengthened their position at the top of the Premier League with a solid 2-0 win over Brentford, while Leeds United delivered the biggest surprise of the week by beating Chelsea 3-1 at Elland Road.

Arsenal struck early when Mikel Merino scored with a sharp header in the 11th minute. Brentford struggled throughout the match and failed to register a single shot on target.

The game opened up late, allowing Bukayo Saka to seal the result in stoppage time after running onto Merino's accurate pass.

The win extended Arsenal's unbeaten run to 18 matches in all competitions and gave them a five-point lead at the top. Leeds impressed their home crowd with a spirited 3-1 victory over Chelsea. First-half strikes from Jaka Bijol and Ao Tanaka put them firmly in control.

Pedro Neto pulled one back for Chelsea early in the second half, but Dominic Calvert-Lewin restored Leeds' cushion in the 72nd minute to complete a memorable win.

Leeds thrilled their home fans with a 3-1 win over Chelsea, with Bijol and Tanaka scoring early, Neto replying, and Calvert-Lewin sealing the victory.

Aston Villa climbed to third place after a thrilling 4-3 comeback win over Brighton. Brighton led 2-0 through Jan Paul van Hecke and a Pau Torres own goal, but Ollie Watkins began the fightback before halftime. Amadou Onana and Donyell Malen pushed Villa ahead 4-2, and although Van Hecke scored again late on, it was not enough.

Liverpool were held 1-1 at home by Sunderland, with Florian Wirtz rescuing a point through a deflected shot after Chemsdine Talbi had given Sunderland the lead. Crystal Palace claimed a narrow 1-0 win over Burnley, who have now lost five straight games.

KM Asif sparks Kerala shock win over Mumbai

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Scoreboard:
Kerala 178/5 (Samson 46, Vinod 43) beat Mumbai 163 all out (Khan 52, Rahane 32; Asif 5/24) by 15 runs.

Kerala pulled off a stunning 15-run victory over defending champions Mumbai in a Group A Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy (SMAT) match on Thursday, thanks to a brilliant five-wicket haul by pacer KM Asif. The 32-year-old has been in fine form this season, claiming 13 wickets at this venue alone.

Kerala posted a competitive 178 for 5 in their 20 overs. Opener Sanju Samson, recently transferred from Rajasthan Royals to Lucknow Super Kings, led the charge with a 28-ball 46, hitting eight boundaries and a six. Vishnu Vinod contributed a patient 40-ball 43, while Mohammed Azharuddeen's quick 32 helped Kerala set a defendable total.

Mumbai, chasing 179, looked solid early with Ajinkya Rahane scoring 32 off 18 balls and Sarfaraz Khan making 52. A 80-run second-wicket stand with Suryakumar Yadav kept hopes alive. However, KM Asif's fiery spell turned the match around, as he dismissed key batters including Sairaj Patil, Suryakumar Yadav, and Ishan Kishan. He finished with figures of 5 for 24, supported by Vignesh Puthur's 2 for 31, to leave Mumbai reeling at 149 for 7.

Kerala eventually bowled out the visitors for 163 in 19.4 overs.

This was Mumbai's first loss in five games, while Kerala moved to third in the five-team pool with 12 points. Despite the defeat, Mumbai remain at the top with 16 points.

The win highlights Kerala's fighting spirit and Asif's match-winning ability, giving the team a major boost in the SMAT standings.

Sunil Narine becomes first bowler with 600 wickets

ABU DHABI

Mystery spinner Sunil Narine made history on Wednesday by becoming the first cricketer to take 600 wickets in competitive T20 cricket. The 37-year-old West Indies star achieved the milestone while playing for Abu Dhabi Knight Riders against Sharjah Warriorz in the World ILT20.

Narine claimed the landmark wicket by dismissing Tom Abell, a moment celebrated by his franchise. Abu Dhabi Knight Riders honoured him with a special edition jersey featuring the number 600 to mark the achievement. The milestone highlights Narine's consistent brilliance and longevity in T20 cricket, cementing his place among the game's greatest bowlers.

Over his illustrious career, Narine has represented Kolkata Knight Riders, Abu Dhabi Knight Riders, Trinbago Knight Riders, and Los Angeles Knight Riders, impressing fans worldwide with his deceptive variations and match-winning spells. His ability to bamboozle batters has made him a key figure in every franchise he has played for, earning respect from teammates and opponents alike.

"The Knight Riders family stands immensely proud of Narine's extraordinary achievement, recognising that this record may well stand the test of time as one of cricket's most enduring milestones," the franchise said in a statement on Thursday.

Narine's 600 wickets in T20 cricket not only reflect his skill but also his dedication and adaptability across leagues globally. As the cricketing world celebrates this landmark, Narine continues to inspire aspiring spinners with his craft and passion for the game.

Kalikesh Singh Deo begins full term as NRAI Chief

MOHALI

Kalikesh Narayan Singh Deo has officially begun his first full four-year term as President of the National Rifle Association of India (NRAI) after being elected unopposed at the NRAI general body meeting on Thursday. The elections were conducted under the supervision of Justice (Retd) Nirmaljit Kaur, the Returning Officer.

Deo expressed gratitude to the general body and emphasized the importance of sustaining India's recent successes in shooting. "Indian shooting has currently seen its most successful phase in history over the last couple of years, both in terms of success and popularity, and that increases our responsibilities manifold," he said. "We promise to leave no stone unturned to accelerate this growth momentum and maximise the potential of our talented athletes."

Pawan Singh, elected unopposed as a key office-bearer, highlighted the use of technology to identify and nurture talent nationwide, as well as training coaches and shooters for alternate careers after retirement.

The elections also formalized a new Executive Committee and Governing Body. Key members include Olympic bronze medallist Gagan Narang, Kunti Malik, Zorawar Singh Sandhu, and Elavenil Valarivan. Amit Sanghi was elected Senior Vice President, while Kanwar Sultan Singh and Sushma Singh were elected Vice Presidents.

Jenkins hurt by NASCAR 'take-it-or-leave-it' deal

CHARLOTTE

Front Row Motorsports owner Bob Jenkins testified Wednesday that he felt "honestly very hurt" by NASCAR's last-minute "take-it-or-leave-it" charter agreement, which arrived with just hours to sign a 112-page document. The federal antitrust trial also involves 23XI Motorsports, co-owned by Michael Jordan and Denny Hamlin, challenging NASCAR's charter system.

Jenkins said the offer came at 6 p.m. on a Friday with a midnight deadline, leaving little time for review. "No attorney on the East Coast was available to read a 112-page document," he noted. Jenkins requested an extension, but NASCAR Commissioner Steve Phelps clarified it was only for review, saying, "Negotiations are concluded. We are not re-opening the document."

The agreement, which went into effect this year, ended years of negotiations. Jenkins described it as "insulting" and a step backward, saying NASCAR used pressure tactics as 13 of 15 teams had already signed. He testified the deal made team owners vulnerable despite the charter guaranteeing race entry and a share of revenue.

Jenkins, a lifelong NASCAR fan, emphasized he has never turned a profit running Front Row, estimating losses of $100 million even after winning the Daytona 500 in 2021. He and 23XI contend NASCAR acts as a monopoly, limiting teams' revenue and flexibility.

Ortiz surges, McIlroy struggles at Australian Open

MELBOURNE

Mexican golfer Carlos Ortiz fired a brilliant six-under-par 65 to share the first-round lead with Australia's Elvis Smylie and New Zealand's Ryan Fox at the Australian Open on Thursday, while Rory McIlroy struggled in tricky, blustery conditions at Royal Melbourne.

Ortiz's round featured six birdies, two bogeys, and a spectacular eagle on the 17th hole, giving him momentum late in the day. "You had to respect the golf course and I think I did a great job," he said. "We planned it, stayed smart, hit greens, and made some good putts." Smylie, 23, thrilled the home crowd with seven birdies against a single bogey, showcasing creativity and careful shot placement in challenging winds. Fox matched the leaders with eight birdies and two bogeys, keeping the early leaderboard tightly packed. Denmark's Rasmus Neergaard-Petersen (67) joined France's Clement Charmasson and Scotland's Cameron Adam two strokes back, also eyeing the top spot. McIlroy, a five-time major champion and 2013 Australian Open winner, could not handle the wind as he carded one-over 72. Despite five birdies, six bogeys—including mistakes at the first, fourth, seventh, 11th, 12th, and 16th—left him off the pace. "It was a wonderful atmosphere," McIlroy said. "Conditions were tricky, and I need to putt better. I made some birdies but also too many mistakes. Hopefully, it's better in the next rounds."

Shaam Debuts as Director with Uplifting Indie Track

Actor Shaam, known for his long-standing career in Tamil cinema, has stepped into direction with an inspiring Indie song titled Varum Vetri. The track is sung by Kannada star Kichcha Sudeep, adding star appeal to the project.

Shaam has both directed and produced the musical album under his banner, SIR Studios. Actress Neera appears alongside him, bringing vibrancy to the song's theme of aspiration. Composer Amrish scores the track, while choreographer Sridhar Master enhances it with energetic dance moves. The album will be released globally by T-Series.

The project's technical crew includes cinematographer K. A. Sakthivel, editor Lawrence Kishore, lyricist Jagan, art director V. R. Rajavel, stunt coordinator Monster Mukesh, and costume designer Neera.

Meanwhile, Shaam has wrapped filming for The Trainer, director P. Velmanikkam's action thriller inspired by the Tamil Nadu Police's Kaavalan app. The film stars Srikanth as a skilled dog trainer with a trained dog named Lee playing a key role. Shaam portrays a police officer in a plot involving a criminal gang controlled by an acupuncture doctor. Packed with eight major action sequences, the film promises an intense viewing experience.

Life is like a traffic signal

The songs and trailer launch ceremony of the film with a different film title 'Kempu Haladi Hasiru' was held at Sri Renukamba Studio. This is the third time that PrasadKumar Naik is investing through the Sunrise Entertainment and Films banner. Mani.A.J.Karthikeyan, who has directed one Tulu film, has said an action cut for a Kannada film for the first time. It will have a meaningful tagline of 'Stop, Think and Proceed in Life'. Prasad Irla and Harish Dhasmana are also identified as producers under Balaji Film Works.

SrihanDeepak, the son of a businessman who for some reason becomes a delivery boy, is the Hero. Divya Suresh is the Heroine. Famous Tulu film actor Arvind Bolar, Shailashri Mulki, who played the main role in 'Ondu Motteya Kathe', and Chindodi Vijaykumar, Srijan, Meenakshiharthi, Manas, Umesh Hegde Kadthala, etc. have acted in the film.

Cinematography is by Manjunath Nayak, Director and four songs written by Kishore Moodbidre have been composed by Mumbai-based Vikash Vishwakarma. Editing is by Satish Irla, background music is by Prem Bharat, and dance is by Geetha (Spe). Film has been shot in beautiful locations of Mangalore and Udupi. The film is planned to be released in the first week of December.

LOCKDOWN
Release Postponed Again After Cyclone Disruption in Chennai

Anupama Parameswaran's Lockdown, a woman-centric drama inspired by true events, has received a U/A censor certificate but has been delayed for the second time. Originally scheduled for December 5, the release was cancelled after Cyclone Ditwah severely impacted Chennai, flooding several areas and disrupting normal life. The makers said the postponement was to ensure the safety of audiences, theatre staff, and distribution partners. A new release date is yet to be announced.

Directed by AR Jeeva, Lockdown earned praise through its trailer for its intense depiction of women's fear, isolation, and social pressures during the 21-day nationwide COVID lockdown. Anupama plays Anitha, a young woman terrified to return home, navigating unsettling encounters, financial stress, and repeated attempts to reach a doctor stranded alone. Emotional moments—such as her tearful apology to her father—added depth to the trailer's impact.

The film was first set for release in June 2024 before its latest postponement. Lockdown features supporting performances by Charlie, Nirosha and Livingston, with music by N.R. Raghunandan–Siddharth Vipin and cinematography by K.A. Sakthivel. While fans are disappointed by the delay, the team maintains that safety must come first as Chennai recovers from the cyclone.

Cameron Confirms New Avatar Saga After Fire and Ash Finale

James Cameron has revealed that Avatar: Fire and Ash, releasing December 19, will conclude the franchise's first major saga. The filmmaker explained that the first three films were designed as a single, unified narrative arc, making the third installment more of a culmination than a traditional sequel. In an interview with io9, Cameron noted, "I don't think of Fire and Ash as a sequel. I think it was a culmination of a saga." He added that the story direction for all

three films was embedded in the franchise's original blueprint. Viewing the upcoming movie as the "third act," he said, offers a healthier perspective on the long-term storytelling approach.

Costly Climax Filming Begins for Mythic Epic Nagabandham

The team behind Abhishek Nama's much-awaited pan-Indian film Nagabandham, starring Virat Karrna, Nabha Natesh, and Iswarya Menon, has begun shooting its grand climax sequence. Shot at Ramanaidu Studios, the finale is described as one of the most ambitious ever attempted in a mythological action drama, carrying an estimated cost of ₹20 crore for the climax alone.

A massive set featuring a monumental sacred door—crafted by production designer Ashok Kumar—forms the centerpiece of the sequence, echoing the grandeur of ancient temple architecture. To elevate the action, the makers have enlisted acclaimed Thai stunt master Kecha Khamphakdee.

The film includes a strong ensemble cast with Jagapathi Babu, Jayaprakash, Murali Sharma, and B. S. Avinash in key supporting roles. Nagabandham delves into the mysteries of India's ancient Vishnu temples, exploring the sacred ritual of Nagabandham. Inspired by treasure discoveries at legendary temples such as Padmanabhaswamy and Puri Jagannath, the narrative blends myth, history, and modern intrigue.

Cinematographer Soundar Rajan S leads the visual storytelling, while Abhe and Junaid Kumar compose the music. Dialogues are by Kalyan Chakravarthy, editing by Santosh Kamireddy, and art direction by Ashok Kumar.

Produced by Kishore Annapureddy and Nishitha Nagireddy, with story and screenplay by Abhishek Nama, the film is set for release in Telugu, Hindi, Tamil, Kannada, and Malayalam.

Bahul Ramesh Praises Love Today as Bold, Innovative Romance

Writer-cinematographer Bahul Ramesh has hailed Pradeep Ranganathan's Love Today as a refreshing and inventive take on modern relationships, far removed from what he calls the "cliched and cheesy" storytelling common in contemporary love dramas. Speaking to Galatta Plus, he said the film's daring look at love influenced by smartphones, social media, and mistrust is what makes it stand out for today's audiences.

Bahul praised Pradeep Ranganathan for boldly taking on the roles of writer, director, and lead actor, calling it a courageous creative decision. He noted that Pradeep's meticulous approach ensured "every single second of the movie counted," resulting in a film packed with unique touches.

He highlighted the innovative montage moments and VFX inserts used during non-dialogue scenes, adding that these choices boosted both humor and pace while appealing to younger viewers who prefer fast, visually engaging storytelling. Love Today, which sparked debate for its unfiltered portrayal of modern romance, became a major commercial success by crossing ₹100 crore worldwide.

Bahul also shared screenplays he admires—ranging from Kannathil Muthamittal and Aadukalam to The Prestige, Ugly, Interstellar, and Kapoor and Sons—placing Love Today among films he considers fearless in their narrative choices.

Rajinikanth Remembers AVM Saravanan with Heartfelt Tribute

Tamil superstar Rajinikanth paid an emotional homage to veteran producer AVM Saravanan, who passed away on Thursday at 86. Calling him a true gentleman with a pure heart, Rajinikanth said Saravanan stood by him during his most challenging phases.

After offering his final respects, the actor described Saravanan as someone who deeply loved cinema and often fondly recalled his father, "Appachi." Rajinikanth shared the personal bond they nurtured over decades, noting that he acted in nine AVM films, all of which became major successes. He credited Saravanan as a key reason behind their impact.

Reflecting on their collaborations, he highlighted Murattu Kalai in the 1980s and Sivaji in the 2000s—both grand productions. Rajinikanth revealed that Saravanan had even discussed a new project with him in the 2020s, though it did not materialize. Deeply saddened, he extended his condolences to the family.

Saravanan's passing a day after his birthday marks the end of an iconic era in Tamil cinema. As the driving force behind the prestigious AVM banner, he shaped generations of filmmaking and earned widespread admiration. His death cast a pall over the industry, with several production houses cancelling events in tribute. Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M. K. Stalin was among those who paid their respects.

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